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THE NEW

STATESMAN AND NATION

The Week-end Review

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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

PHRASED in delicately chosen language, the speech of the Japanese Foreign Minister to the assembled Diet needs careful interpretation. It seems to mean that there can be no further attempt to negotiate with the Chinese Government, which has "thrown away its last chance." A new regime will be set up to act for China, corresponding to the subordinate part assigned to that country within the general plan proposed for the attainment of "stability" in East Asia as a whole. To Soviet Russia Mr. Hirota's references were somewhat menacing. He will be firm in maintaining Japanese concessions in North Sakhalin and will give his "special attention" to "the menace to civilisation of Communist penetration" in China. By singling out the American Government for special praise because of "its fair and just attitude," he appeared to imply that the conduct of Great Britain had been less meritorious—perhaps because China receives arms through Hong-Kong. A subtle phrase seemed to convey a warning that England has given many hostages to fortune in the Far East. But he repeated the usual promise to respect the interests and even the cultural work of other Powers—which may mean that not quite all their schools and colleges will be closed.

The Pekin Tariff

Meanwhile, the new Chinese Customs tariff, imposed by the Japanese through their puppet Government at Pekin, is an excellent example of the spirit in which the Japanese Government means to honour its promises not to discriminate against foreign interests. The tariff contains no clauses which discriminate openly in favour of Japanese trade. Why should it, when methods of obtaining the same result by other means are perfectly well known to every expert tariff wangler in the world? What is done is simply to reduce drastically the duties on those types of goods which Japanese industry is in a position to supply, while leaving unchanged, or in some cases greatly increasing, duties on types of goods which are imported mainly from other countries. If the new tariff stands, Japan will have a virtual monopoly of the Chinese textile market in the areas under Japanese military occupation; and foreigners will be shut out from other trades at once wherever Japanese producers are ready to undertake the supply, and later on for further classes of goods as fast as they become ready. The effect, of course, will be greatly to reduce Chinese Customs revenue, thus weakening economically any Chinese Government which accepts the new regime, and making impossible either the service of foreign loans or the maintenance of payments to the Chinese banks which hold most of the

internal debt. Japan thus kills two birds with one stone —at once weakening China, and securing an assured market for Japanese products.

Suspense in France

The first encounter of M. Chautemps and his minority Radical government with the Chamber found that highly critical audience ominously unanimous. Only one deputy voted against him, while a hundred on the Right abstained. Experience suggests that when it behaves in this way the Chamber has merely postponed its verdict. The Prime Minister was, however, as deferential to Labour as he had been offensive when he smashed his coalition ministry. The test may come when the Chamber debates his promised "code," which is to define the relations of masters and men under the French New Deal. For the time being none of the parties to it will repudiate the Front Populaire, which daily revelations of the extent of the "Hooded Men" conspiracy seem to render more than ever necessary. But the continued sagging of the franc suggests that Big Business may be bent on upsetting even a liberal ministry. On the other hand, the Parisian workers, if one may judge by the debates at a congress of the Socialist Federation of the Seine, have swung somewhat violently to the Left since MM. Chautemps and Bonnet upset the coalition. The Parisian working-class usually is to the Left of its provincial comrades but a swing so marked may mean that the disciplined moderation of recent months is going out of fashion.

The Middle of the Road in America

Mr. Roosevelt holds to his belief that high wages are essential to prosperity, in face of the widespread desire among business men to secure his acquiescence in a wage-cutting campaign. This week he issued a considered pronouncement that, if firms which are seeking to cut wages persisted, the Administration will have to seek alternative methods of keeping up consuming power. Subject to this insistence, the President is evidently trying harder and harder to reach some sort of accommodation with the big business interests. He has modified his own death-sentence on holding companies; and he has been in constant conference with business leaders with a view to setting up some sort of advisory machinery which will enable Big Business to bring its weight continually to bear in authorised ways. In this he has no doubt in mind that the business men will be easier for him to deal with when he gets them out into the open than they are while they lobby ceaselessly behind his back. Meanwhile, the paradoxes of the American situation are further illustrated by the conviction this week of a number of the leading oil companies under the Anti-Trust Law—in effect, for doing just what the New Deal, in its earlier phases, encouraged them to do. The President has also won another round in his battle with the utility companies by securing from a Federal Court a further decision in favour of the T.V.A. This case will probably go to the Supreme Court; but the decision is not likely to be upset. The T.V.A. will continue, in spite of the utility interests; and Mr. Roosevelt will continue in the middle of the road, in the hope that Big Business and Labour will in the end both consent to join him in his attempt to reconstruct American capitalism on less barbaric lines.

Mr. De Valera's Plan

To a correspondent of the *New York Times* Mr. De Valera has disclosed some suggestions for Irish reunion that he may have laid before Mr. Neville Chamberlain the other day. The summary of his interview leaves us still curious about the details of his scheme. He proposes that Ulster should still be governed by its own Parliament as it is to-day. But all-Ireland is to elect by proportional representation (on this method he insists) a Federal Parliament. Unfortunately, he does not tell us with what subjects it will deal. Presumably defence and trade —but is that all? In a phrase or two he hints (but only hints) at what we take to be the real meaning of his plan. In return for reunion he promises the end of Ireland's quarrel with this country. This scrappy and indirect form of publicity is not the happiest that might be chosen.

The Indian Constitution

Lord Lothian, during his stay in India, has been compelled to realise how firm and widespread is the opposition to the federal chapters of the new Constitution. It must not be supposed, because Congress consented, after long hesitation, to form ministries in seven of the eleven provinces, that it has abated its hostility to an imposed scheme. The Liberal moderates and even the Muslims are only a shade less decided in their opposition. Lord Lothian, by way of placating Indian opinion, insists that the Constitution is "flexible" (a characteristic that has been revealed to no one else) and that, if Indians will consent to show their capacity for self-government by working it for a time, Parliament would, on a demand from the Federal Legislature, be willing to amend it. But the Indian case is that the Legislature, based in so far as it is directly elected on a highly plutocratic constituency, and diluted by the nominees of the Princes, cannot reflect the opinion of the nation, which stands revealed in the voting for the provincial chambers. It would be wiser to suspend the coming into force of the federal scheme indefinitely rather than provoke the resistance which in one form or another is inevitable, when it begins to operate.

Parliamentary Programme

Parliament reassembles on Tuesday with a heavy programme of contentious business before it. Among the occupants of the Government Front Bench the Chancellor of the Exchequer is probably most at ease in his mind. Tax revenue is flowing in at an astonishing pace and bids fair to exceed Budget expectations by the end of March. Whatever awkward problems may lie in store when the accounts for 1939–40 have to be framed, Sir John Simon can contemplate the forthcoming Estimates with a fair degree of equanimity, and may even look forward to a modest surplus on the current year's working. Less happy is his colleague at the Board of Trade. Mr. Stanley has to pilot not merely the Coal Bill but the much-criticised Films Bill. Unhappier still is the position of Colonel Muirhead, the Under-Secretary for Air. With his chief sheltered in the comparative tranquillity of the Upper House, he will have to satisfy restive questions from M.P.s on a number of points on which the Cabinet can hardly feel at ease. What are the findings of the Committee of Inquiry into Imperial Airways? What has been done

to eliminate delays, mistakes and waste in the supply of air force equipment? Apart from Air troubles, the next unemployment return seems likely to make an unpleasant impression; the question of relief works is certain to be raised; and there are the controversial issues of electricity distribution, milk and share-pushing to be tackled.

The Coalowners' Lobby

The colliery owners are living well up to their reputation. In their hostility to the compulsory amalgamation clauses of the Government's Coal Bill, they seem to be adopting methods comparable with those of the big business lobbies in the United States, adding an intensive personal canvass of Members of Parliament to the use of every possible instrument of collective pressure. It seems almost as if they really believed that the passage of the Bill would be followed by a holocaust of the rights of property, and the institution of a Socialist system. Yet, as far as we can judge from the terms of the Bill itself, the Coal Commission would find the enforcement of amalgamations an exceedingly difficult business. The truth is that the colliery owners, having succeeded with the aid of the House of Lords in turning the Act of 1930 into a one-sided measure for granting them monopoly privileges without any effective guarantees in the public interest, now regard this unconditional monopoly as theirs by divine right. The Government Bill goes a long way to meet them; but they will not come even an inch forward on their side. To the coalowner mind, there hardly exists any distinction between the Government measure and the Coal Mines Nationalisation Bill which was published this week as it was introduced by the Labour Party last October. This Bill provides for complete public ownership, with administration by a Coal Commission of experts, including Trade Unionists chosen in consultation with the Trades Union Congress. It allows compensation to colliery owners out of the proceeds of the industry, but demands that Parliament shall provide the sum required for compensating the royalty owners. If it were this measure they were opposing, the owners' attitude would be at any rate intelligible.

The Price of Milk

Sound sense is to be found in a memorandum on milk policy addressed to the Government by the Children's Minimum Council. The Council proposes, first, that in all households covered by National Health Insurance milk should be supplied at 1½*d.* per pint to mothers, and children under school age—the necessary subsidy being estimated at £1,663,000 a year. Secondly, though praise is accorded to the milk in schools plan, its limitations are criticised and the suggestion is made that a pint of milk per day should be provided free of cost to all children both on school days and holidays. Finally, the Council appeals to the Government to include in its promised Milk Bill provisions for placing the control of milk production and prices in the hands of an authority representing consumers as well as producers of milk. Dissatisfaction at the present price-fixing system is expressed also in the recent report issued by the Consumers' Committee appointed under the Marketing Act of 1931. The Report, in effect, suspends judgment on the question whether current prices are excessive, but the Committee are clearly of opinion that distribution costs could be reduced. They incline to the conclusions of the Cutforth Commission that wholesale prices should be fixed by an independent authority at a level calculated to elicit adequate supplies for the liquid market, and that the retail price should be left free.

The Cost of Living Index

The Ministry of Labour is now making its second collection of family budgets as a basis for the revision of the cost of living index number. The first collection, made last autumn, brought in a harvest of 13,600 budgets from all parts of the country and from a wide diversity of types of household. After this week's collection there are to be two more—in April and July—the selected dates being designed to cover seasonal variations in the distribution of expenditure. As far as possible, answers are to be secured from the same households at all four dates; but this will obviously not be possible in every case, though a bonus of half a crown is offered for a complete set of four weekly budgets, in addition to the half a crown payable for each separate return. Of course, even 13,600 families form a very small sample of the entire working-class population; and four isolated weeks cannot present a complete picture of expenditure over the year as a whole —holiday expenditure, in particular, is certain to be under-represented in the sample, and any special Christmas expenditure will also be left out. But for the main purpose of the inquiry, these latter omissions do not matter. The question is whether the sample ought not to have been made a good deal larger, and whether some attempt ought not to have been made to cover consecutively more than a single week. But, at the worst, the basis for the new index will be a good deal broader and better than that of the existing index, which has been in use ever since 1914, and is largely based on still earlier data.

Defence and Amenities

Anti-aircraft artillery exercises are beastly anywhere, but it is difficult to believe that the East Coast has no more "suitable" site for a range than one of the most beautiful stretches of Norfolk's salt marshes, right up against a bird sanctuary. Yet that is what the War Office is endeavouring to do. It proposes to locate a large gunnery camp on land dear to the botanist for its profusion of wild flowers and lying between the Stiffkey Valley and the sea. Huts are to be erected, and from May to September the sky over Blakeney Point and the National Trust bird sanctuary is to be rent daily by shells bursting at aerial targets. Gun practice there must doubtless be; but need it be so sited as to spoil land for whose preservation as a heritage of beauty special efforts have been made? The War Office and the Air Ministry have displayed a genius for discovering "suitable" situations for their training activities in places whose amenities the nation can least afford to spoil. Lulworth, the Abbotsbury Swannery, the Lleyn Peninsula have in turn exercised a fatal fascination for the designers of bombing and anti-aircraft exercises. It will be a national misfortune if Blakeney is devastated needlessly in the cause of defence.

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LEAGUE REALITIES

[A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small States alike.—*Presidential Message, January 8th, 1918.*]

TWENTY years after President Wilson concluded with this sentence his Fourteen Points designed to serve as a basis for peace and international reconstruction, Geneva sees the hundredth session of the Council of a League which is in a state of suspended animation. In this coma the League, it seems, is for the present to be encouraged conveniently to remain. Some of the small States whose independence and integrity the American President had at heart are restive and would like to see both their obligations and their guarantees redefined and clarified. But Britain and France are disinclined at this juncture to commit themselves to a definite line of policy with regard to the League's future. The controversial question whether the Covenant is to be revised, and in what direction, is left to the Committee of Twenty-eight charged with the task of reporting on this subject to the next meeting of the Assembly in September. Yet, though no formal discussions have been held this week, every delegate attending the Council is well aware that decisions must soon be taken on one vital issue. Shall an attempt be made to revitalise on previous lines an association of nations which can no longer claim even to be remotely "general"? Is the cry to be "Half a League onwards"? Or is the conception of collective security to be finally abandoned and the League allowed to sink into the status of a polite debating society for the interchange of political ideas and the pooling, perhaps, of economic information?

Already there is an alignment of sides in this issue. Nearly two years ago Holland, Switzerland and the three Scandinavian States placed on record a demurrer against inflexible application of Article 16 (the "Sanctions" Article) of the Covenant. To-day Switzerland is asking for recognition "within the League" of her complete "neutrality" (whatever that may mean); Poland is eyeing askance the mutual assistance obligations imposed on her as a State member; and the Swedish Foreign Minister, Mr. Sandler, in a speech last week to the Riksdag, announced uncompromising opposition to the tendency to transform the League into an alliance of countries opposed to the supposedly hostile and potentially aggressive non-member States. Applauded loudly by the isolationist press in this country, Mr. Sandler's declaration elicited more significantly the warm approval of the *Times*, whose editorial comment was that the British Government is equally determined to set its face against any League reconstruction which divided or attempted to divide Europe into two antagonistic camps. Of a section —predominant probably in influence—of the British Cabinet this is certainly true.

On the other hand, the revitalists are hard at work. Viscount Cecil exhorts the small States to count their League blessings and remember that in collective security they have (or had) their only shield. On behalf of the Liberal Party, Sir Percy Harris urges Mr. Eden to put teeth into the Covenant on the assurance that in that event British Liberals will be behind him. Undismayed by the breakdown of collective action in defence of Abyssinia, the protracted make-believe of non-intervention in Spain and the dismal fiasco of last month's Far Eastern conference at Brussels, the *News-Chronicle* demands that, in order to prove the vitality of the League, "positive action" must be taken against Japan. With so much of the fleet needed in Europe and with American opinion as it is to-day, to call upon the British Government to intervene—and on China's behalf—is crying for the moon. But, immediate or particular tactics apart, the attitude of the uncompromisingly loyal League enthusiasts is based on a common hypothesis, of which part is valid and part is not. They contend, with truth, that the principle of mutual assistance against aggression still remains the world's best chance of preserving peace, and that the League idea should still appeal to the conscience and intellect of mankind, despite defections from its membership. They proceed from these premises to argue that a League from which Germany, Italy and Japan have seceded can work if only the three remaining Great Powers in its membership—Britain, France and the U.S.S.R.—will take the lead in stiffening up the Covenant.

How far a Left Government could still salvage the League and rebuild the system of collective security on this basis is, unfortunately, not for the moment relevant. Apart from the question of hesitations in the ranks of the minor Powers, the fact has to be faced to-day that the majority view in the British Cabinet would prefer a Mediterranean pact with the Duce—followed, if possible, by an economic agreement with Herr Hitler—to a recreation of the collective system at Geneva. A final, supreme effort of British diplomacy on these lines is to be expected, even if recognition of Italy's Abyssinian conquest has to be part of the price. Unless and until that effort fails, Britain will obstruct—no matter what the Covenanters say—any proposal for resuscitating the League which accentuates the ideological cleavage between members and non-members.

Obstacles, however, do not end here. Let us suppose that all British attempts at a *détente*, however transient and superficial, with Italy and Germany fail, and that Japanese aggrandisement in China menaces even more nakedly than to-day the Far Eastern interests of British finance capital. Let us imagine that the British Government in these circumstances reverts to the idea of a revitalised, if less than universal, League, and that France follows suit. Two difficulties at once arise. First, the collective force mobilisable against the combined aggression of non-member States (excluding, of course, the U.S.A.) is by no means overwhelming. The Covenant, with all the Protocol teeth inserted into Article 16, becomes a much more dangerous instrument to its signatories than it was in 1932, when Japan first invaded Manchuria. Secondly, effective military sanctions by the League would be impossible unless offensive operations by Britain and France were supplemented by whole-hearted co-operation from the U.S.S.R. As a weapon in French control the Little Entente is broken; Poland sits calculatingly on the fence; Switzerland, Belgium, Holland and the Scandinavian States would be reluctant and strategically minor participants in any European dog-fight. Without the U.S.S.R. the League is an impotent policeman. But what would be Stalin's price for co-operation? Beyond doubt, a guarantee of Russia's Western frontier. That is a commitment into which no British Government—Tory or

Labour—could now enter without careful definition of the nature of the obligation. Actually the Covenant never involved a commitment " to fight for the Czech or Polish frontiers "—as isolationists love to assert—but it is true that to-day it would be far more difficult than it would have been even a few years ago to promise on behalf of the British people to fulfil the obligations of Article 16. (These obligations were limited at the time of Locarno to such help as could reasonably be expected in view of each country's resources and geographical position.) Mr. Baldwin could say that Britain's frontier is on the Rhine; it would be a bold Premier who publicly asserted that it is on the Vistula.

This being so, statesmen who have been so much responsible for sabotaging the League, yet now wish to salvage some security from the wreckage, may be driven back to the conclusion that, if the League is not to degenerate into a periodic Rotary Club meeting of statesmen, fraught with no more tangible hope than that from its academic deliberations a practical structure of " Kellogg-model " arbitration may one day emerge, recourse must in the meanwhile be had to a system of regional pacts and graded guarantees of assistance. As matters now stand, Britain would despatch an air force unquestionably to preserve the territorial integrity of France or the Low Countries.

France has declared that she would regard a German invasion of Czechoslovakia as a *casus belli*, and the French General Staff would probably insist on that pledge being honoured. But England would not declare war on Germany if an *Auschluss* between the Reich and Austria were consummated *via* an internal and successful Nazi revolt against Dr. Schuschnigg; nor would she despatch an expeditionary force to defend Prague against German infiltration abetting a Sudetendeutsch rising, unless the security of France were patently menaced. And to preserve the integrity of the Polish Corridor or of the frontiers of the U.S.S.R. neither Britain nor France would immolate one single ensuffraged grenadier. Their probable action would be to form a non-intervention committee.

To burke realities is cheap intellectual dishonesty. And the facts are that national conceptions of self-interest are the strongest forces in the contemporary political set-up. But this is not to say that reluctance to accept unlimited commitments need be tantamount to complete impassivity in the event of law-breaking aggression. Benevolent neutrality can take a positive form; and even though undertakings to intervene to the extent of 100 per cent. military aid may have to be qualified by individual countries' conceptions of " vital national interest," a revised and more flexible definition of Article 16 of the Covenant might, it is argued, evoke from States members of the League sufficient " graded " assistance against aggression to make potential aggressors think twice before embarking on military adventures in any direction.

It is an imperfect conception of collective security? Admitted. The inherent lack of definition of obligations and guarantees recalls unhappily the nebulous commitments which, under the regime of Sir Edward Grey, led Britain into a victorious and fruitless war. But this must be said. With China, Abyssinia and Spain to give the lie, who can deny that peace has proved temporarily divisible? The League to which the Fourteenth Point of President Wilson gave birth died untimely, partly because France demanded of it the impossible and indefensible task of perpetuating the *status quo* crystallised in Clemenceau's treaties, partly because the Great Powers clung too jealously to their own sovereignty, partly because the plain man—concerned with his own hearth and home—was not encouraged to fight for international justice by the " power politics " manoeuvres of statesmen whose faith in the League was so patently insincere. We should feel more confidence in the future of a new-model League, functioning as a sort of registrar of regional pacts and limited guarantees, if the architects entrusted with the rebuilding were not the very men who destroyed the old structure of " indivisible " collective security.

TECHNO-PURITANICS

THE amusing aspects of the controversy arising out of our " General Knowledge " paper have perhaps too much obscured the serious issues raised by Professor Hogben. The first complaint was not important. The Christmas examination paper was rather literary than "general," and it was fair enough for those who enjoy research in encyclopaedias rather than in anthologies of poetry to complain that their own recreational needs were inadequately appreciated. But it did not seem to me serious criticism to argue further that Fascism somehow benefits by our pre-occupation with old-fashioned cultural values. I must not now enter into the sticky controversy about whether there is such a thing as a bourgeois as opposed to a proletarian art and literature.

All I need say here is that a technical age is more than any other in need of a journal which takes the arts and the humanities seriously; we are more likely to get stubborn resistance to Fascist tendencies in society from a population which is widely educated in the humanities, even if they are rather ignorant of science, than from people, who hold, like the five Oxford students who wrote to the paper last week, that we ought not to waste time on discussions of Shelley or even, apparently, of more modern poets. Fortunately that is not the choice before us. As we learnt last week, one of the prizes in this very literary competition was won by an aeronautical engineer—which is a comforting fact for those who imagine the world divided between the values of the Polytechnic (perhaps it would be equally fair to say Oxford?) and those of Bloomsbury.

But let me come to the serious side of Professor Hogben's argument. THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, he urges, should appeal above all to the salaried class which is increasing in numbers and importance. This class is interested in science and in a technical and not in a literary approach, and if it is to be won for Socialism, as it must be if Socialism is to succeed, it must be approached not with the stereotyped arguments of political warfare, but with an up-to-date analysis of a new situation in which the interests of the technocrat are on the side of a transformation to Socialism. There is much truth in this; the emergence of a conscious salaried class is a vital factor which has upset many old-fashioned calculations. But Professor Hogben exaggerates the proportion of the salariat which is technical. The bulk of it is clerical. Secondly, it is surely unjust to this class to suggest that it is peculiarly impervious to the appeal that is so consistently made in this journal to every intelligent person not to let himself be hoodwinked into surrendering his liberty or his humanity as the middle classes were persuaded to do on so wide a scale in Germany. Thirdly, I should say that to overweight this journal with technical facts and arguments would make it less readable and useful to everybody, and especially to the technician, who goes to his specialist papers for technical material, and comes to THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION for ideas and information about just those topics in which he is

not himself specially informed. Indeed, it is the man of letters and the politician who are let down by an inadequate treatment of modern science. For it may be fairly urged that the pressure of foreign politics has of recent years encroached too much on that side of this journal which deals specially with the application of scientific knowledge to human and social problems. Even so, problems like the location of industries, the economic waste under capitalism, the possibilities of expansion under Socialism, questions of public health, and particularly that of malnutrition, have been constantly dealt with by experts in this paper. Professor Hogben rightly refers this week to the work of Sir John Orr on Malnutrition; no journal has given more continuous and careful treatment to this important piece of research work and propaganda. But I think it would be fair criticism to say that there has been inadequate use made of the ferment of social interest developing amongst specialised scientists and technicians. One may see this new sense of responsibility recognised when periodicals that hitherto have been purely technical discuss week by week the social responsibility of scientists for the prevention of war and for social reorganisation of many kinds. It does us no harm to be reminded that we have not sufficiently called upon the services of this new scientific humanism.

I now come to an argument of great interest, which appears in the letter that Professor Hogben contributes this week. He appears to think that Socialism may somehow or other come without a serious political battle. He advocates concentration on building up new industries outside capitalist control. He notices that no fierce political fight was necessary to put wireless outside private profit-making; the B.B.C. was the result of political foresight which he thinks can be repeated if we do not waste time on such out-of-date battles as that for the nationalisation of the coal mines. In such cases we are likely to win, he thinks, just at the time when capitalists no longer mind about preserving a vested interest, which is becoming out-of-date as a result of the development of other forms of power. The danger is real and worth pointing out. Socialists are much too apt to talk as if to nationalise (with compensation) an industry which may be no longer economic would be a triumph for Socialism. It is certainly more important to gain possession of the keys of those modern developments which are transforming the social structure. But Mr. Hogben's example of the B.B.C. illustrates the weakness of his argument. The B.B.C. to-day, though outside the profit-making system, has in the last few years been rendered strikingly safe for capitalism. We agree with Mr. Brogan that the Socialist must consider not only the waste of capitalism and the frustration of science in the modern world, he must also face the problem of power. Actually Professor Hogben is unduly optimistic in believing that capitalism will quietly allow the B.B.C. model to be adopted for the development of new industries. But if it would, the prospect would not necessarily be cheerful for the Socialist. It is not difficult to picture a society in which this process had been carried out in all the key industries and in which the result was much more akin to Fascism than to Socialism. Indeed, Fascist countries to-day claim to be approaching Mr. Hogben's ideal, and in time of war we should certainly see a general and rapid development of this type of technological change. Whether the result was Socialism or not would depend on whether society was still dominated by a privileged class or approached to democratic equality.

One word more. Some of the correspondents who attack the whole literary and artistic side of this journal remind me a little of the Puritans, whose hatred of bear-baiting Macaulay declared to be due not to love of the bear, but to dislike of witnessing the pleasure of the spectators. The main point of a humanistic education is that it prevents such a grudging resentment at the sight of other people enjoying pleasures and attainments that one does not share. I find the sight of people continuously playing bridge positively nauseating, and I hope the reason is an objective dislike of social disutility. I trust it has nothing to do with a suppressed desire to play bridge. When people suggest that to foster the traditions of English literature and to try to cultivate and spread an appreciation of music and pictures is "middle-class escapism" I recognise without difficulty the worst signs of embittered puritanism. It is possible "to take politics seriously" and not to forget that the object of political change is to increase human happiness, just as it is possible to take politics seriously and be a confounded snob. The object of Socialism is to distribute the wealth of the world more fairly and to abolish that class division which subjects the many to the economic domination of a few. But it is also part of the thesis of equality that the pleasures of the mind should be accessible to all and not monopolised by a few, and I suggest that E. M. Forster hit the nail on the head when he wrote that cultured tradition is as essential to democracy as ruthless analysis, and that it is the business of a Left paper to offer both to its readers.

KINGSLEY MARTIN

THE ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

ON the face of the matter, there appeared to be no reason why the boom of 1937 should not last for some time longer. With the nations rearming at an ever-increasing pace, and paying for rearmament largely by means of loans in preference to raising current taxation, there was bound to be a stream of orders flowing out to the heavy industries, which had been previously the most depressed. The money thus disbursed was bound to find its way into every sort of spending, and to increase the general demand for consumers' goods. The banks, moreover, at any rate in Great Britain and the United States, were in so liquid a condition that there seemed to be no reason why they should not grant credit for a considerable expansion of output without placing any strain upon their resources. Finally, investment in housing remained, in Great Britain, at a very high level, even if it had fallen somewhat from the peak level of a year to two years ago.

But, ready as the speculators were to cash in on the profits of the boom of 1936–7, there was jumpiness everywhere—and with reason. For who, in face of the uncertainties of the political outlook over the whole world, could venture to prophesy for more than a very little time ahead? Even if world war did not break out, who could tell how many wars on a smaller scale there might be? The bottom had fallen out of the Spanish market—except for Fascist armaments—in 1936; and in 1937 the bottom fell out of the much more important Chinese market. Germany, instead of heeding Dr. Schacht's vaticinations, pledged herself more than ever to national self-sufficiency as a deliberate economic policy. France staggered uneasily, pushed from side to side alternately by M. Caillaux and the financiers and by the Communists and the C.G.T. Every talk of an attempt to remove restrictions on international trade—for example by means of an Anglo-American trade agreement—was met by a howl from vested interests that, whoever might suffer, they at least must be spared in the name of "rationalisation" and "orderly marketing."

Under these conditions, it was difficult to see how boom conditions, at all events in Great Britain, could survive beyond the duration of intensive rearmament. But as rearmament seemed likely to be proceeding a good deal faster in 1938 than in the first half of 1937, there was in this fear about the future no basis for panic about the immediate prospect. Even the slackening of activity in house-building seemed likely for some time to be counterbalanced by sustained factory construction, and by the building of shops, cinemas and other forms of economic activity which followed in the wake of the housing boom. The outlook might be bad for 1940, or even for 1939; but it was not easy to see how, unless the world either decided suddenly to disarm—a most unlikely event—or became involved in a series of local wars, there could be much wrong with the prospects of profit and employment in 1938.

Then things began to go wrong in the United States, and

the Wall Street slump communicated itself to the European stock markets. Share values, here as well as in America, were suddenly written down with violence; and, apart from the speculators who had actually lost money, the entire body of shareholders suddenly felt poorer, because their holdings were valued at a good deal less than before. In Great Britain as well as in the United States the rich, feeling poorer, started to economise, and the demand for luxury goods promptly fell off. Anyone who has followed the recent trend of retail trade in Great Britain will not have failed to notice that, during the latter part of 1937, sales were falling in Central London even while they were still rising quite rapidly in the provinces and in the London suburbs. In effect, the British recession, such as it was up to the end of 1937, seems to have been largely due to a curtailment of current spending by the well-to-do, coming on top of some decline in house-building and in the consequent demand for furniture and fittings and other kinds of residential equipment.

An economy such as ours—or of course such as America's—is very sensitive, on account of the great inequality of incomes, to fluctuations of expenditure by the well-to-do. The effects of such fluctuations are not limited to the direct curtailment of current demand which they involve. They set-up large psychological reactions. The real immediate danger of a severe American recession lies not in the dependence of the rest of the world on American finance, or even on the American market, but rather in the likelihood that panic among the rich in the United States may communicate itself to the rich spenders and the investors in Great Britain, and make them both cut down their consumption and refuse to lock-up their savings in any enterprise involving a sacrifice of liquidity.

Unless there is a serious crisis in America, there is no *economic* reason (political reasons are too unpredictable to be profitably discussed) why 1938 should be a bad year from the standpoint of employment and business activity. It is, indeed, hardly likely to be as good in these respects as the opening months of 1937 promised to be; but there is nothing that we can see to make it appreciably worse than 1937 as a whole. For 1939, on the other hand, the outlook seems very much less good; for by then house-building of the types which have accounted for the boom is certain to have fallen off a great deal, and the factory-building phase of rearmament will also probably have passed its peak. The real danger-point seems to be still—apart from the effects of a real break in America—at least a year ahead.

All the same, we shall not be surprised if for the next few months the employment position goes on getting rather worse. The distributive trades, which in recent years have absorbed much more additional labour than all manufacturing industries taken together, have now ceased to take on more workers, and may be expected to employ fewer persons as they settle down after the big geographical shift of population which has been largely responsible for the speed of their growth. Industry does not seem likely to expand its labour force much, if at all, beyond the numbers already employed; and the various forms of "service," as distinct from manufacturing, employment are specially sensitive to curtailments of spending by the well-to-do. The volume of employment may fall, even if the level of profits and production remains high on account of Government expenditure.

The morals? First, that the Government will be wise to make its plans *at once* for dealing promptly with a probable recession. Even if recession does not come in serious form until 1940, there is none too much time—for plans, as previous experience amply shows, can be soundly laid only if they are prepared a long time in advance of actual execution. Secondly, that the recent improvement of conditions in many of the depressed areas, being based precariously on the constructional phase of rearmament, is no reason at all for relaxing efforts for the permanent reconstruction of these areas, but quite the reverse. It is rather an opportunity for establishing new industries in them while the level of spending power is temporarily swollen by Government contracts. Thirdly, that it is of the utmost importance to keep in check the powerful tendencies, fostered by the economic policies of recent years, towards monopolistic restriction of supplies in face of a fall in the consumers' readiness, or power, to spend. On the whole, the rise in prices from the low levels of 1932–33 has not been a bad thing—if we except the artificial inflation of certain prices in the early months of 1937. Prices, as they now stand, are not on the whole too high, in relation to the rest of the economic structure. But they may very easily become too high, if producers' rings attempt to hold them up by restricting output in face of a falling market.

A LONDON DIARY

I HAVE been hoping for weeks that the Spanish Government would not be driven into a policy of reprisals. But I am not surprised that it has. When I was in Eastern Spain three months ago Franco's raids on ships and on open towns were far less terroristic than they are now—most of his planes were occupied in slaughtering the Basques. But even then there were five raids on or near Barcelona on the day I arrived, and in Valencia I watched a raid that destroyed two blocks of working-class houses. The question of reprisals and of any possible end to the war came up in conversation with the Prime Minister. Up to that time Dr. Negrin had withstood all demands for terroristic bombing of open cities under Franco's control, not only for humanitarian reasons, but because he believed the mass of Spaniards to be on his side and knew that nothing was so likely to alienate them and to consolidate Franco's sympathisers as Government raids. Apparently something has changed Dr. Negrin's views: I can well believe that there was strong pressure to take action that would warn Franco that the Government too could bomb. One result of the intensified savagery of the war is to start people talking again about a possible armistice. The strength of the appeal for an armistice is that it is difficult to see how either side can win without razing to the ground every place they capture and killing a large proportion of the population. Far the best hope of a quick end lies in the development of further dissensions behind Franco's lines. I believe the advantage of defence over offence now to be so great and the probability of the war indefinitely dragging on so obvious that both sides might listen to any practical proposal for an armistice. But I wish the correspondent who urges this would suggest a practical basis. The seventeenth-century wars of religion in Germany ended with a settlement on the basis of *cujus regio, ejus religio*, but how can you adopt a Federal division of that kind when the religion is an economic system? It scarcely seems practicable.

* * *

I refrain from congratulating Hitler on the suppression of *Der Stürmer* until I know that it is really suppressed and not merely banned for the moment on the private understanding that it or its equivalent is to be allowed to continue the filthy work in a few weeks' time. Most people in this country have read something about Streicher's obscene fanaticism, but comparatively few have actually read the paper. I do not think the history of beastliness contains its equal. For Streicher was not content with general nonsense about the Jews betraying Germany in the war and during the Republic, with fake "science" about race contamination and Nordic blood and with the crazy thesis that all international and national troubles of the world throughout history have been due to the Jews. That would only have been mad. But he is also malignant, cruel and obscene. He loved to pillory individuals and to hound unfortunate and obscure men and women to concentration camps. He had a spicy column of personal insults for people who were depraved or brave enough to shake hands with a Jew or to continue their friendship with men whom only a few years ago the German public was delighted to honour. The more salacious, the more detailed the allegations of sexual offences the more satisfying

no doubt to Herr Streicher. No law of libel protects the Jew in Germany, no police protect him against private assault and public insult. Why Hitler should have chosen this week to take action against his old friend, Herr Streicher, I don't know. No one has done more of the devil's work of lying and bamboozling; no one has thought of crueller ways of stopping thought by creating superstition and encouraging thuggery. It may be—I hope it is—that Hitler has at last been convinced that in the present unrest of Germany and with the increasing need of a favourable opinion abroad, Streicher is no longer an asset. I hope so. But I shall not be surprised if the thing appears again very soon on the assumption that foreign opinion is foolish enough to believe anything, forgive anything and forget anything.

* * *

The following letter speaks for itself. The German original is in front of me, bearing the official stamp. It is written in one hand, presumably that of a prison official, and signed in another hand, that of the prisoner to whose friends it was sent. Here is the text, translated into English:

Dachau Concentration Camp, 27.11.1937.

The *Neue Vorwärts* (Karlbad) No. 229 of October 31st, 1937, the *Deutsche Volkszeitung* (Paris) No. 46 2nd Year of November 14th, 1937, also the *Deutsche Volkszeitung* (Prague) No. 44 of October 31st, 1937, and *Die Stimme*, a Jewish newspaper (Vienna) No. 693 of November 11th, 1937, have again spread frightful lies about the concentration camps. These shameful lies have been invented by the émigrés Jews. The Jews in Dachau are again suspected of having smuggled false reports out of the camp.

Until the perpetrators of the lies are discovered we Jews will be kept in solitary confinement. We inform you that during the period of this isolation we will be locked away, deprived of every comfort and not allowed either to send or receive letters.

It rests with you to use your influence over the émigrés Jews in Prague so that such foolish lies about the concentration camps will in future be suppressed, for the Jews here in Dachau, as compatriots, are being held responsible for them.

Since writing the above I have seen other identical letters written or signed by Dachau prisoners. I may add that I have also received terrible further confirmation of the details about Dachau, published in this journal on November 13, of last year.

* * *

Will Dyson's death recalls very vividly a time in the history of Socialism so long past that it seems almost pre-Christian—the very early days of the *Daily Herald*. Dyson was one of the oldest of the "old stagers" of that journal; he joined with it in the days when it was hardly a newspaper at all, more like a glorious co-operative whoopee which did just manage to come out daily, as by a miracle, which had no capital but enthusiasm, no respect for rank or committees or any other authority, and no idea but to belabour injustice and to cheer on every vigorous forward movement. It was the *Herald* of the Syndicalists and Guild Socialists, of the Suffragettes, of Irish Nationalism, of the Belloc who wrote *The Servile State* and the Chesterton who wrote a passionate revolutionary poem about the 1911 strikes, and Dyson was in his element there. His best work was done in that mood of joyous iconoclasm, when Capitalism appeared as a Fat Man only waiting to have his enormous stomach pricked by the sword of Labour and when the thought of a Labour leader dressed in society clothes was matter for a derisive cartoon. Not that Dyson's pencil was gentle; his attack was savage enough at times and always definite and purposeful. But it was an attack, like the pre-war Chesterton's, of hope and eager individualism. After the war, in the first flush of the Armistice, he drew excellently again for a time, and all who possess it cherish the small volume of cartoons which is called *Mr. Asquith*. But when he returned from Australia in 1930 it was to a world which did not suit him. He had no deep sympathy with organised and disciplined "movements," whether Communist or orthodox; they did not strike on his box, and the slump-harried, semi-Fascist capitalist was not the Fat Man of his prime. He was a Radical of the heyday of Radicalism, and though in his later years he drew some good cartoons, they will not stay in people's memories like the pictures of the *Two Baby-Farmers* or *The Man Behind the Gun*.

Every now and again British working men get up and say "No, damn it, we won't have it," and I usually think they choose a good cause to make a fuss about. You remember how General Haynau, the Hungarian flogger of women in 1849, was chased by sturdy draymen and sent back with a message that England really disliked cruelty and supported common people who fought for their liberties. Well, I'm pleased when I see that spirit still existing in the country. I'm pleased, for instance, when the Southampton dockers send a Japanese ship unloaded back to Canada, when the dockers in Glasgow and elsewhere back them up, and now when the Middlesbrough dockers stand so firm that British pig-iron and scrap, meant for tearing the guts out of Chinese civilians, is not, after all, shipped to Japan. Some of the credit belongs to the China Campaign Committee which is also, by the way, to be congratulated on the great success of the Exhibition of Chinese Art at 9 Conduit Street. So considerable is the success that a week after the opening a cheque for £200 (made up of 2*s*. 6*d*. entrance fees) was telegraphed to the International Red Cross for Central China, and another is expected to follow it now. The life of the Exhibition is to be extended for another week—to February 4th.

* * *

THE newspapers reported the other day the trial of a certain Lord Blank. The magistrate inquired very carefully about whether the man before them was a peer of the realm, and found that in fact Lord was not a title but a Christian name. Just why the magistrate should be curious about this I did not understand, because seeing that British justice is the same for all, rich and poor, peer and commoner, the man's status could make no difference to his trial, could it? However, the story started my imagination chasing off on a different tack—what effect has it on one's life to be christianed with the name of Lord? Do hotel proprietors bow and scrape, and when you find your bill double what it should be do you explain that you are really plain Mr.? Do the advantages outweigh the disadvantages? Some months ago I was lunching with a friend whose Christian name is Prince. He told us that on at least two occasions on the Continent the natural confusion—he is a man of dignified carriage—had produced most useful results; a diplomatic visa had been supplied though unsolicited on one occasion, and on another the heart of a French gendarme had been most conveniently softened. Another guest at the table then made what I thought was an admirable remark: "I suppose," he said, "that the best name to have is King Hall." I must really ask Commander King Hall whether that is the origin and explanation of his exceptionally successful career.

* * *

A friend tells me a story, said to be authentic, which says more than many leading articles. A small boy who had heard that people got killed in war told his father that he would never be a soldier because he did not want to be shot. His father said that if he refused to be shot by the enemy, the Government would probably shoot him. The small boy pondered this dilemma and then said: "Well, I'll be the Government then!"

CRITIC

M. GOGA AND THE JEWS

[FROM A CORRESPONDENT]

ON becoming Premier of Rumania, M. Goga promptly announced that in matters of racial policy he would follow in the footsteps of Hitler. Rumania has really little to learn from Nazi Germany in the matter of oppressing the Jews, for she has an ill-starred record that goes back at least seventy years. Her iniquitous treatment of the Jews had already become such a scandal in 1868 that representations were made not only by the British and French Governments but also, upon the instructions of Bismarck, by the Prussian Consul in Bucharest. Ten years later Disraeli and Bismarck co-

operated with other statesmen at the Berlin Congress in making the emancipation of the Jews of Rumania an essential condition of the country's independence, but the Rumanian Government contrived to wriggle out of its solemn undertaking. Until the end of the Great War only a few hundred native Jews had been naturalised, in each case by Act of Parliament, and it was therefore hoped that the long-continued wrong would at last be righted by the Minorities Treaty, which Rumania signed in 1919 as a condition of the enlargement of her territory. The provisions of this Treaty were necessary not only to effect the emancipation of the 250,000 Jews in Old Rumania and to ensure that the 500,000 Jews in the annexed provinces of the Bukowina, Transylvania and Bessarabia should be recognised as Rumanian nationals, but also, of course, in the interests of the other ethnical and religious minorities. The Treaty has been violated in various respects, but most flagrantly in regard to the Jews. Eighteen years after its signature there are still tens of thousands of Jews denied naturalisation, who are consequently " Stateless " ; the Jewish communities are refused the " equitable share " of the State or municipal budget to which they are entitled for educational, religious, or charitable purposes ; the admission of Jewish students to the Universities is in practice subject to a *numerus clausus* ; and there are periodical assaults upon the Jews.

Hitherto the Government had strenuously denied that it was guilty of any discrimination against the Jews. Now, for the first time, there is a Government that openly proclaims that it intends passing special laws against them, and that has, indeed, already adopted such measures. This radical change is largely due to the intensified anti-Semitic propaganda conducted during the last few years with the aid of vast funds from Germany. At least a hundred anti-Jewish newspapers, all displaying the Swastika, are estimated to have been founded with Nazi money. The increased trade relations between the two countries have facilitated the supply of funds for the dissemination of race-hatred, which is intended to lure Rumania over as a political as well as a " cultural " ally of Germany. This course is strongly favoured by that veteran anti-Semite, Professor Cuza, Minister without portfolio in M. Goga's Cabinet, who preached Jew-baiting before Hitler was born. The names of the two are familiarly coupled as " Goga and Gaga."

The leaders of M. Goga's National Christian Party made such extravagant promises during the election that, as soon as they were in office, they had to announce their intention of carrying them out. But they soon realised that this task would not be easy, partly because of the representations made by the British, French and American Governments against the contemplated infractions of the Minorities Treaty, and partly because of the economic unsettlement which the execution of such a programme would entail. M. Goga has indulged his poetic fancy in magnifying the Jewish population into 1,500,000, for the official census of 1930 showed that the number of Jews was 776,280. He will not be able to expel " 500,000 invaders," for they do not exist. Nor will he be able, as he promised, to withdraw 150,000 liquor licences from Jews, for the total issued in the entire country is only 52,796, of which 41,096 are held by Christians and only 11,700 by Jews. The decree forbidding Jews to employ Christian female servants under the age of forty has been postponed until the agricultural season, as it would have meant the dismissal of 60,000 persons mostly of the peasant class. But the action already taken in the suppression of Jewish newspapers; the dismissal of Jewish doctors from official positions ; the interference with Jewish businesses ; the withdrawal of travelling permits from 120 Jewish journalists ; the closing of Jewish bookshops in Bessarabia ; the proposed disbarring of 1,500 lawyers ; and the threatened revision of the naturalisation of all persons who came into the country after December 1st, 1918—these are all sufficiently grave infractions—actual or potential—of the Minorities Treaty to claim the urgent attention of the Council of the League.

M. Micescu, Rumania's Foreign Minister, has been feverishly busy at Geneva and will probably succeed in preventing the application of the urgency procedure, as he has threatened that if the petitions of various Jewish organisations figure on the agenda, Rumania will repudiate the Minorities Treaty. It is expected instead that Mr. Eden and M. Delbos will emphasise their Governments' opposition to the violation of the Treaty, both in private conversations with M. Micescu and during the closed sessions of the Council ; but it is to be feared that M. Goga's Cabinet will take advantage of the time thus gained to go ahead with their anti-Jewish legislation. Those who may suggest that King Carol will not allow the realisation of such a programme because his best friend is a Jewess must be reminded that Madame Lupescu is not a Queen Esther ; she is primarily interested in her own skin.

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to P. H. Baker.

All cuttings should be addressed to " This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Extracts should not be sent without their context. The article or passage should be sent in full with the proposed excerpt marked.

In reply to your query, I say " No ! " as outside the Bolshevik element in the district, no one uses or needs the Free Library. There are several 2*d.* and other libraries in the High Street that pay rates and taxes and strive to get a living.—Letter in *Orpington, St. Mary Cray and Kentish Times.*

An 18-months-old girl sat screaming for two and a half hours while her hair was " permed," it was disclosed to the N.S.P.C.C. yesterday. The Society's inspector was told that during the wait the mother held the girl's hand and kept telling her : " Hush, darling. Think how pretty you will look when it is done."—*News Chronicle.*

Advertiser is inclined to sell her 1936 Phantom II enclosed drive Limousine Rolls-Royce (suit large family or ambassador) and her late 1935 Park Ward Saloon Rolls-Bentley ; she would hire her two hacks to competent lightweight riders near Sunningdale, and requires a cheap Schipperke Bitch.—Advt. in *Times.*

The trouble started when Sir John Lorden, a past president of the federation and a former Member of Parliament, described the virtue of the House of Lords in rejecting the Addison Housing Bill and the infamy of the Commons in its treatment of property owners. He resented the charge that property owners wanted slums. " Who made the slums ? " he asked. " The tenant every time. The landlord cannot get into the houses to do the necessary repairs."—*Manchester Guardian.*

The Deputy Medical Officer of Health (Dr. Matthew Fyfe) said the Department of Health was now insisting that every house reconstructed must have a bath, and normally it would not approve an application for assistance in respect of a house which, when reconstructed, would contain only two rooms.

Mr. W. Walker, Cupar, said the department was carrying the bathroom idea too far.—*News Chronicle.*

The Bishop [of St. Edmundsbury & Ipswich] wrote : " I think you are quite mistaken in your suggestion that there are 13½ million underfed people in this country. The number who are underfed is really extremely small, and for the most part it is their own fault, because their money is unwisely spent."—*Daily Express.*

We at Selsey Bill may be falling into the sea, but while we are here we intend to stand up for our beloved young King.

At the local picture house the other night a man *sat* through the National Anthem. Hardly before he was outside he was promptly and severely sat upon by a local who at once had the support of every Selsey man and woman there.—Letter in *Daily Express.*

The directors of the Bath and County Recreation Ground have decided to allow tennis to be played on the ground on Sunday afternoons, but cricket and croquet will not be permitted.—*Daily Telegraph.*

CHRISTIANITY AND WHAT NEXT—II

I take the witness of Christianity in another of the issues which the modern world distinctively presents for discussion and decision, the issue between the individual and the State.

The claims made by the State in Communist Russia, and in Fascist Germany and Italy, cut at the root of the traditional Christian separation between the political and spiritual spheres. The modern totalitarian States are not content that the individual should render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's. They demand that he should render at least some of the things that are God's. Not only are neutral non-political art and literature denounced in Germany, but also neutral non-political religion. Christianity indeed, just because it purports to be an international religion, taking no account of frontiers, making no distinction of peoples, is anathema to a racial nationalism which believes in the national superiority of Germany and the racial superiority of Aryans. Thus the Catechism recently issued by the German Nazi Church announced that:

> The German has his own religion, which springs living from his own special observation, sentiment and thought. We call it the German or German racial religion, and by that we mean the peculiar but natural German faith in the nation.

This German religion is described as a

> healthy and natural religion which makes the German brave, pious and strong in the fight for folk and Fatherland. The German religion is such a creed. It is without symptoms of disease and degeneration . . . Christianity is not such a creed; on the contrary, it is rather the type of an unhealthy, unnatural religion.

Here, indeed, is a challenge to Christianity. What has Christianity, as represented by Canon Barry, to say to it? There is a long and reasonably enlightened discussion on the relation of Christianity to Capitalism, to Communism and to Fascism, and a wider discussion of the relation of the individual to the group. And the conclusion of the discussion? That:

> The Christian ethic has got to be thought out and thought through afresh in terms of this new limiting situation. That is the big task for Christian thinking during the next twenty-five years.

On pacifism the Christian is informed that no solution is to be offered. On the State's claim to control his spiritual life he is admonished to think again.

Having concluded his survey of the contemporary world, Canon Barry makes the following observation:

> It may be that pure and undiluted Christian principles cannot become directly and at once the law of the world in which we have to live, as it is in 1937.

The mildness of this announcement is breathtaking. It is indeed an understatement so gross as to be in effect a misstatement. Here is a world in which a grossly inequitable economic system permits the luxury and wealth of the few to outrage the poverty and misery of the many, in which any serious attempt to alter the system, to mitigate the inequity, is met by a repression so violent that all the hardly won liberties of men, all the carefully built-up decencies and humanities of civilisation, disappear overnight; in which men are flogged and tortured, women and children blown to pieces, burnt, asphyxiated, shot. When conferences of statesmen assemble, their main preoccupation appears to be not to remedy the evils which they are met to consider, but to concert a crime which every participant has an equal interest in committing. Meanwhile, every clause in the Christian code of ethics is set at nought. Whereas men are enjoined to practise virtue, kindliness, charity and compassion, they revel in their cruelties, glorify their pride, and make a parade of their ruthlessness. War is acclaimed a god; aggression is regarded as the appropriate expression of a noble and manly spirit; hymns are written to machine guns, and poets grow lyrical over the bombing aeroplane. Now all these things are not only not diminishing in the world, they are growing. The use of torture to extract confessions from prisoners is growing. No, assuredly, "pure and undiluted Christian principles cannot become directly and at once the law of the world in which we live."

In the light of these facts the attitude of such a book as *What Has Christianity to Say?* appears to me to be groundlessly optimistic in regard to the future of Christianity. For, if this book is a fair sample of Christian thought, it is groundlessly optimistic to suppose that modern Christianity has any prospect of altering the facts. Why, Canon Barry asks, are not the thousands of men who still care for peace and righteousness "in one victorious army under the leadership of Christianity?" A sufficient answer to his question is, I submit, afforded by his book.

It is difficult for even the most ardent secularist to view with complacency the situation indicated by the figures given at the outset; to remain unconcerned by the present bankruptcy of Christian doctrine. Man, the fact is obvious, has a need to believe. He lacks the courage to gaze into pain, evil, death and the deserts beyond death with his own eyes. He needs to look through the safe and misty glass of legend and dogma. The average human mind, in fact, like a creeping plant, demands a support to which it may cling and upon which it may grow, and, finding it, embraces it with furious intensity. In all ages and in all countries this need has been satisfied, this support has been afforded, by religion. To-day there has grown to maturity a generation which is, to all intents and purposes, without religion. Unless we are to suppose that this generation is a biological "sport," in the sense that it lacks a characteristic possessed by all its predecessors, we can only suppose that the need exists, but is unsatisfied, and that psychologists who make much of the repressed sex needs of the last generation would be well advised to turn their attention to the repressed belief needs of this one. Nature abhors a vacuum no less in the sphere of mind than in that of matter, and into the chamber which the scientists, the critics and the Higher Critics have swept clean, there enter seven gods worse than the bearded Jehovah whom they have ousted. As the God above the clouds recedes and grows dim, an earthly figure, complete with raincoat and moustache, comes to take His place. "Hitler is lonely; so is God. Hitler is like God." "We greet the Leader each morning and we thank him each night that he has provided us officially with the will to live." In these and a thousand similar utterances the repressed need to believe of contemporary Germans has found vent.

I would venture the opinion that the Left, in its preoccupation with economics, has underrated the importance of the religious *motif* in the barbaric harmonies of modern Fascism.

In England a number of straws show which way the wind blows. There is the spread of the Group movement, the popularity of Spiritualism, the success of the P.P.U., the modern flirting with mysticism.

I end with some questions. First, is there any reasonable prospect that official Christianity will revive and once again become a living religion? If the witness of *What Has Christianity to Say?* is a guide, the answer would seem to be "No." Secondly, is it credible that the vacuum which the decline of official Christianity has created will remain permanently unfilled? I think that it is not. Can it, thirdly, be adequately filled, at any rate in this country, by such movements as Communism or, more pertinently, Pacifism, which already possess the necessary idealism and will probably soon possess the necessary martyrs to qualify as a religion? Or can the neo-mysticism preached by Aldous Huxley, which calls the individuals not only to a change of heart, but to the saving of societies by means of their changed hearts, ever become the religion of more than a few? If it cannot, are we threatened by a State- or Leader-worship in England, deriving one of its roots from men's psychological need to revere and to believe?

Throughout these articles I have refrained from raising the question whether a religion can ever be true—whether, that is to say, religion ever reveals to man, as it purports to do, a

non-human, spiritual reality which evokes his reverence and can provide guidance for his life. In that case none of those religious substitutes which are exclusively secular, such as Communism or Dictator-worship, can be expected permanently to fill the bill. C. E. M. JOAD

THE OPEN MIND

CREDULOUS by nature, I have had the unhappy experience all through life of being compelled to shed one conviction after another. First I believe the man who makes a statement, and afterwards, such is my credulity, I believe the man who contradicts it. There is nothing too foolish for me to believe when I am first told it. I have in my time believed that it is unlucky to be sent a present of white flowers, that the sun is I forget how many miles distant from the earth, and that eating fish is good for the brain. It only needs a man to come along, however, and firmly dispute any of these propositions for me to veer round and change my opinion to its opposite. I do not suppose I ever believed anything more sincerely than that eating fish is good for the brain. My uncle told me this when I was a child, quoting as his authority not only the papers, but a local doctor who rode a horse and had red whiskers. My uncle was equally convinced that the skin is the best part of the fish, and he would eat both the black and the white skin of filleted plaice with enormously well-acted relish. "Don't forget the skin, Y," he would say to me, as he noticed my lack of appetite for the dark substance; "it's the best part of the fish." Need I say that I believed him wholeheartedly? At the same time, I had no particular desire to eat the best part of the fish. I was still at an age when the human being eats for pleasure.

I think it was my uncle himself who afterwards persuaded me out of my belief in the virtues of the skin of fishes. In the course of his wide reading of the evening paper, he came on a paragraph which stated that the skin was indigestible; and whatever my uncle read in the evening paper was for him true and so a theme for propaganda among his relations and friends. He went to his grave, I fancy, however, with his faith unshaken in the good effect of fish-eating on the brain. He did not live long enough to see it announced in the papers that this was a superstition—a medical superstition I think it was called. I did; and, casting aside my old conviction, went on eating fish merely for enjoyment.

Not that my conduct, either at table or elsewhere, was much influenced by my beliefs. Any child can believe quite easily that some particular food is good for it and, at the same time, determinedly avoid it. I was willing to concede to my elders that fat was nutritious and necessary to the growth, but that did not make me wish to eat it. I concurred with them in regard to the bone-forming properties of porridge, but I was not then such a hypochondriac as to worry about the formation of my bones. My uncle, having read or misread something in a paper, told me that people did not eat half enough salt and that no one would ever be ill who ate an eggspoonful of salt a day. I believed this and ate about half an eggspoonful one day. Having done so, I gave up salt-eating, but not—for a considerable time—my belief in salt.

Salt is, perhaps, the subject on which I have changed my opinions more often than on any other. Brought up in a belief in the virtues of salt-eating, I read fairly early in life that in these climates salt is almost unnecessary, as enough of it for health is contained in our ordinary food. Then from the belief that salt is unnecessary I advanced to the belief that it is dangerous. One day in a vegetarian restaurant a woman, observing the salt on the edge of my plate, said to me with great earnestness: "Don't eat that. It will give you cancer." I think I have read that Robert Louis Stevenson's wife would not allow him to eat salt for some such reason. I am not sure what my present position as regards salt is. I think it is that it ought to be iodised. Whatever it is, however, I have shilly-shallied so much in my opinions on this and other subjects that I begin to wonder whether it is possible to be certain of anything at all.

Take the tomato, for example. How certain I once was that that glowing fruit—the forbidden fruit, some say, of the Garden of Eden—was a cause of the most dreaded of diseases! I do not know who set the story about, but there was a time when many people ate tomatoes with a fearful joy, convinced that they were risking their lives in doing so. Then someone quietly declared that the tomato was perfectly harmless, and then, several years later, someone loudly announced that it was the most beneficial of all fruits, if it can be called a fruit, except the lemon. I have no notion on what authority any of these opinions is based, but I have believed them all in turn and will believe anything else you choose to tell me about the tomato to-morrow.

What then, is it possible for a reasonable man to believe about anything? Can he be sure even of the goodness of spinach? If he shapes his life on the theory that an apple a day keeps the doctor away, may he not be dooming himself to bitter disillusion? This year he may be all for wool next the skin, but can he be certain that next year "no wool next the skin" will not be the golden rule of health? Is it safe for him even to believe in the increasing alphabet of vitamins? Already we hear warnings against taking vitamins to excess. No sooner, again, did he pin his faith to sun-bathing as a cure-all than he found himself, a blistered victim of sun-bathing, in the hands of the doctor. For years he has believed in the importance of lying on his back on the floor and circling his legs in the air, yet only the other day I read a warning against the perilousness of this exercise for those over fifty. It seems that nothing is so certain that its truth can be established for ever.

And this is true, not only in matters of health, but of every branch of common knowledge. If there is one thing of which I was more certain than of another till the present week, for example, it is that the Little Owl is a pest and a menace to bird-life. I like the little creature. I have spent many happy moments watching him as he bobbed up and down on a branch and seemed to threaten what he could do to intruding members of the human race if he had a mind. Everyone said that he was a dangerous nuisance, however—an alien immigrant that was increasing in numbers at an incredible pace and doing his best to exterminate the song-birds in every district in which he settled. Being told this, I naturally believed it, as everybody else did. I have stayed in a house in the country in which my hostess discovered a Little Owl's nest with eggs in it in a tree in her garden; and, though she is the most tender-hearted of women, her first thought was that those eggs must never be allowed to hatch out. Too humane to wound the bird's feelings, she could not bring herself to steal the eggs and destroy them, but one day in the absence of the mother-bird, she conveyed them into the house, hard-boiled them and carefully put them back into the nest again so that the Little Owl might not be left comfortless. I do not know what the Little Owl thought of the hard-boiled eggs, but has anyone ever shown more solicitousness than my hostess in the treatment of an enemy? For most of us, let it be remembered, at that time thought of the Little Owl as a noxious creature comparable with the Australian rabbit, the rat and the grey squirrel.

This week, however, Miss A. Hibbert-Ware, who has been investigating the matter, tells us that all that we have been believing about the Little Owl is nonsense. Not only is the Little Owl very sparing in attacks on song-birds, but he is exceedingly useful in eating enormous numbers of five species of insects, four of which are "listed as pests by the Ministry of Agriculture." He is a glutton, for example, for the daddy-long-legs, and who would grudge him all the daddy-long-legses in his neighbourhood? But stay. Is it any longer certain that there is nothing good to be said of the daddy-long-legs? May it not be that to-morrow we shall discover that the leather-jacket never deserved its evil reputation? I begin to suspect that I have been wrong in the past about the greenfly on the

roses. I doubt whether slugs can be entirely pestilential since Nature made so many of them. If I live long enough, I expect to hear a defence of the rat. We have seen the tomato and the hawk vindicated. Why should the vindication of the grey squirrel be impossible?

Henceforth I will try to keep an open mind on as many matters as possible. If someone tells me, for example, that bracken is a menace because it drives out the heather, I will listen to him with interest, but a little sceptically. If someone says that we should eat five times a day, I will try to remember that someone with equal authority says that we should eat only twice. If a doctor declares that oysters have no food-value, I will weigh his opinion against that of the doctor who says that oysters are the ideal food. If someone tells me that the world is getting better, I will accept his opinion only in so far as it can be reconciled with the contrary opinion that the world is racing round a series of hairpin bends down to the Bottomless Pit. After all, one gets tired of believing things one day and having to disbelieve them the next. The case of the Little Owl should be a lesson to all of us. Can we be so sure now about psycho-analysis or relativity or milk or raw carrots? Certainly this is not a world that gives much encouragement to a credulous and dogmatic man.

Y. Y.

Correspondence

THE INDIAN POLICE SERVICE

SIR,—The case to which you referred last week is only exceptional in Indian Police records in that the man Kiroo killed one of the policemen engaged in torturing him. Thanks to the intervention of the Lahore High Court, Kiroo escaped free. There are a few cases in the records of the police killing their victims and either going free or getting very light sentences. In one instance last year the sentence for beating a woman to death in the process of extracting a confession was a few years.

While all India is well aware of the conditions in the police service, as exposed by Chief Justice Young in his judgment in the Kiroo case, there is not a British official who will ever admit the accuracy of any strictures on the general character of the service. That, of course, is not surprising, for British officials are responsible for the conduct of the force under their control, and one could hardly expect them to agree that bullying the people, the regular beating of prisoners, and the torture of suspects to secure confessions, are the common methods of the police.

The police in India are part of the political machine whereby British control over the country is maintained. Their functions are 95 per cent. political and repressive and punitive, and only 5 per cent. protective and defensive of the people. In fact, all over India the cry is, "God save us from the police!" They are undisciplined in their attitude to the ordinary citizen, and in the villages they are often licensed tyrants.

In the sense that they accept orders from their superiors they are a disciplined body, and they act as such in times of political trouble to the entire satisfaction of the British authority. On instructions from the Secretary of State, or the Viceroy, they are then paraded and given medals for their lathi charges, and are congratulated on "their magnificent loyalty and splendid work in face of great difficulties."

In India there is no public control of the police and even under the new Constitution there can be none. Until there is such control and the entire force is changed in its character and its functions it will remain what it is—the enemy, and not the servant, of the people. Theoretically control of the police has been transferred with responsibility for law and order to the Provincial Governments, but in fact no local Ministry can make regulations, give orders, or in any effective way deal with the police. The "Service" was cunningly made immune to public control by those who framed the new Constitution and yielded to the Die-hard cry that there must be no interference with the discipline or organisation of the police. Most of the British officials (all in the higher ranks) are direct appointees of the Secretary of State. They are absolutely immune in pay, position and prerogative from any action of the local administrations, and the Governors are specially charged to see that they are not interfered with.

This fact gives those who want to raise the Kiroo case in Parliament their opportunity. The Speaker will not accept a question on Indian affairs if it is on a matter within the control of the Provincial Governments, but it seems to me he is bound to permit the interrogation of the Secretary of State on matters concerned with the organisation, discipline and conduct of the police, for Parliament itself has expressly reserved these things to the responsibility of the Minister.

LEONARD W. MATTERS

69 Fleet Street, E.C.4.

THE THIRD WAY

SIR,—The correspondence on the general knowledge paper has netted a shoal of red herrings which can be assigned to one of two species.

Some correspondents shirked further enquiry into the kind of knowledge which modern citizenship demands by choosing to interpret my letter as an assertion of the claims of natural science alone. My analysis actually showed that natural science fared better than modern economic or constitutional history, contemporary social institutions and foreign affairs. The omission of these was explicitly and emphatically criticised in my letter.

Others detect a plea for the dictatorship of the technician, and Mr. Brogan challenges me with the statement: "There are several possible future civilisations among which choices may be made; those choices are not going to be made by technicians but by whatever persons are in political and economic authority. Then the technician will be called on to produce the technical equipment."

With all of this I agree heartily, and venture to draw the conclusion that the education of a citizen called upon to make an intelligent choice should prescribe enough acquaintance with natural science to specify the range of choice available and enough knowledge of political and economic authority in contemporary society to guide him along what Mr. Brogan calls the road to power. Whoever set the paper had even less respect for knowledge of the second kind than for natural science.

The same is true of Mr. Brogan when he talks at large about the employer without regard to the complex apparatus of salaried officialdom and managerial functions in large-scale modern industry. Mr. Brogan says that there *may* be danger of Fascism if we ever have in power a Labour Government "giving any signs of using that power to make fundamental changes." "In that case," he adds, "the technicians who will be of primary importance will be the soldiers, sailors and aviators." Clearly he is thinking of an attempt at a military *coup d'état* on the Carson model in contradistinction to a mass movement of the magnitude of Hitler's following.

Fascism will not become a mass movement if a progressive party can create a united front of all employed persons, and the simple division of society into workers, employers and professional fighters furnishes no key to the way in which they may do so. Mr. Brogan's dreary power-politics, which dismisses discussion of what we are planning as mere Utopianism, reflects the lack of contemporary radical scholarship relevant to current needs, and illustrates the extent to which our Left intelligentsia is living on the intellectual fat of a previous generation.

Marx studied the impact of science on society in his own day and correctly pointed out certain trends characteristic of the first phase of modern power production. If the intellectuals of the Left applied themselves to current problems from the same standpoint it would be sufficiently clear that these trends have been widely deflected and even reversed in the present and late phase of power production and chemical manufacture which has multiplied the number of persons engaged in technical or administrative employment contingent upon special skill and training. This was less obvious when the Webbs brought painstaking industry combined with a naturalistic outlook to bear on the study of trade unionism and public administration. If they had worthy successors the present discussion could draw on comparable studies on the growth of the middle-class salariat and the structure of large industries whose *owners* are parasitic shareholders with no direct participation in the role of the "employer." Because there is so little general knowledge about the impact of science on contemporary social institutions, Socialists are committed to one or other equally disheartening alternatives.

The first is a compromise between trade unionism and monopolistic capitalism to shift the burden of dividends on to the income tax of the salaried middle class, when impending bankruptcy threatens loss of membership to one and loss of revenue

to the other. The outcome of this can be gauged by imagining the sequel if hansom-cab manufacture had been nationalised in the year of my birth, i.e., about the time when the first vehicles driven by an internal combustion engine were patented.

Mr. Brogan's alternative is to persevere till you have an overwhelming majority. Meanwhile it is Utopian to discuss or decide what you want to do with it. This view was plausible, while it could be sustained by belief in the progressive polarisation of society into a large compact mass of discontented impoverished employees and a small handful of effete employers. From any other point of view it has to meet the obvious objection that people may not vote an overwhelming majority to a party which has not decided what it proposes to do.

Scientific humanism suggests a third way. Unemployment and the shift of population are forcing the responsible leaders of the Trade Union movement to examine it, and to abandon an attitude of hostility and suspicion to technical innovation. The third way is based on the growing recognition that monopolistic capitalism has surrendered the creative initiative of an earlier period, and has become an obstacle to the further progress of invention. It is therefore at the same time an obstacle to the aspirations of the class whose advancement depends on expanding avenues of employment for special skill and training. This is common ground with the Trade Union demand for new industries in the depressed areas.

Those who advocate the third way assert that the time has now come to *create* new social organs to exploit new technical resources under public ownership. They believe that a programme which will cement a united front of all employed persons is a programme for *creating new* industries in contradistinction to *acquiring old* ones which will wither away in course of time.

Even when it is desirable to acquire existing industries as public amenities, much of the opposition to doing so will be silenced if the demand is reinforced by explicit proposals for supplying technical initiative which is lacking under private enterprise. Either way, the loyal co-operation of the technician in devising the details of a challenging programme and the loyal service of the technician who will implement it in due course are of cardinal importance to the policy of contemporary Socialism.

Space allows me to add only two factual footnotes on the foregoing statement of opinion: (*a*) there was no vigorous outcry of robbery by an enraged middle class when the nation took creative initiative out of the hands of private enterprise by setting up the B.B.C.; (*b*) while our legal and literary intelligentsia have exhausted the resources of their geographical erudition, having the past few years of Labour in opposition, the single domestic issue which has kept alive the cause of social progress in the House of Commons has been the *Malnutrition Crusade* of my friend and colleague, John Orr, with his devoted band of young scientific workers studying the nation's nutritional needs and productive capacity for food. LANCELOT HOGBEN

DOCTORS AND WAR

SIR,—I should be greatly obliged if you would give the publicity of your columns to a matter involving a principle of importance to the general public.

You will be aware that a short time ago a circular was sent by the British Medical Association to all members of the profession, asking them what work they would be prepared to undertake "in the event of a national emergency arising." My object is to call general attention to a method that has been employed, in at least one area, in an attempt to compel doctors to fill in their forms and toe the line.

One of my colleagues, not himself a member of the Association, received the following letter, from which I omit merely the sender's name and address:

BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION.
——— Division.

DEAR DOCTOR, 14th January, 1938.

In spite of a reminder sent to you on 23rd December, I have not received the enquiry form in connection with medical service in the event of a national emergency arising. I am sure that you will appreciate that a wholly satisfactory result to the enquiry now in hand is of national importance, and I appeal for your co-operation in securing that so far as you are concerned this shall be attained. If you have any difficulty in filling up the form I can clarify the position for you if you will communicate with me.

I trust that you will help in the task allotted to me by returning the form at once. It would be an extremely unpleasant duty for me to have to report that no return could be obtained from you and, therefore, that it was to be assumed that you are not prepared to help in any way in the event of a national emergency arising.

I would also point out that those doctors who have been given choice of home service will be the last to be called upon, should an emergency arise, for active service abroad. Those doctors who have not returned their forms will probably not receive the same consideration. Yours faithfully,

Emergency Officer.

The implications of this letter, particularly rich in the final paragraph, surely do not need to be underlined.

London, W. D. MCGAVIN

THE CHURCH TO-DAY

SIR,—The article of Mr. C. E. M. Joad, "Christianity and What Next?" in your issue of January 22nd, is certainly provocative and, as a liberal cleric, I wondered whether you would grant me a few lines of reply.

The drop in the number of worshippers is quantitative and not qualitative. Whilst we are losing the number who, in past generations, made it their business to come to church for conventional reasons, this does not mean that the Church is the weaker for their loss. Statistics prove but little, and the standard of theological writing and scholarship of the present time would certainly challenge comparison with any previous period.

It has been well pointed out by Canon Barry that there is a vital challenge to Christianity from certain non-Christian forms of government, such as Fascism, and he lays down certain principles, based upon Christian theology, which justify the opposition of Christianity to these philosophies which would deny the Christian doctrine of the sacredness of personality. His applications of that opposition may be open to question but this does not affect his principles. For example, many Christians will agree with Niebuhr and Kenneth Ingram that Christianity should seek to work through the "Left" and not to attempt an alternative to it. Again, many will wish to accept the completely pacifist position. But Mr. Joad would do well to recall, as Conrad Noel has repeatedly pointed out, that a vital Christianity does not of necessity imply absolute pacifism. In the same way many of the "Left" would refuse the designation. It is at least arguable that there is nothing un-Christian in armed opposition to such an aggressor as Franco.

Canon Barry's question, "What has Christianity to say?" may surely be answered by the Christian opposition which is awakening to war and Fascism. It opposes these things on the grounds of a specific philosophy of life to be found in the stream of Christian theology. The meaning of that theology is becoming clearer, though its social import was never wholly lost. The figure of Jesus is becoming viewed in a revolutionary light. The utterances of such authors as Niebuhr, or of the essays in such works as *Christianity and the Social Revolution* or *Towards the Christian Revolution*, are the authentic living voice of Christianity on social issues. If Mr. Joad will examine the reports of the Lambeth Conferences or of the C.O.P.E.C. movement, he will find that Christianity has a great deal to say and for that reason it has not always earned the thanks of capitalist classes. No doubt, Mr. Joad bases his present position upon his philosophy. It is his answer to the question, "What has vitalism to say?" The Christian social conscience, likewise based upon a philosophy, is the answer to Canon Barry's question.

Two small points. Not every church is empty or only peopled by the aged. St. Mary's, Oxford, when under Canon Barry, dispels such a statement. A number of churches are still under the sway of those who wish to pervert Christianity into being a sort of extra policeman employed to safeguard the interests of the Tory party! Many clerics are struggling against this disadvantage in the battle for human freedom and social justice. May one cleric invite the aid of Mr. Joad in this work of seeking to transform a merely quantitative Christianity into a qualitative movement? If he were to give his aid, he would be helping a common cause far more than by hurling bricks at stained-glass windows. F. H. AMPHLETT MICKLEWRIGHT

The Beeches, Squire's Walk,
Wednesbury, Staffs.

MRS. WEBB

SIR,—May I as a capitalist be allowed, on the occasion of Mrs. Webb's 80th birthday, to add my tribute to the magnificent Webb partnership?

Educated as a scientist and engineer, the Webbs' Minority

Report of the Poor Law Commission first aroused my interest in the scientific method in public affairs. From the laborious investigation of facts extending over a century certain definite and simple conclusions emerged, which seemed to me to be convincing; in my youthful innocence I wondered why the Government did not immediately legislate! Ten years ago, when we were engaged in writing the Liberal Industrial Report, I had occasion to study carefully the existing literature on trade unions. Here again I found the Webbs' realistic study, and the conclusions they drew from it, of overwhelming importance. Although their book was nearly thirty years old, nothing written more recently was of comparable value.

Few things can be more important than the scientific study of how man behaves in society. It is depressing that hardly anybody has followed the Webbs' splendid example; our universities to-day are just beginning the realistic study of economics and seem still to be years away from any idea of the realistic study of politics. The Webbs have demonstrated to us the kind of research which is necessary if we are to understand the working of democracy; a task which has to-day become terribly urgent if we are to maintain democracy and all it stands for against the threat of the new barbarism. When shall we learn to follow their teaching?

In spite of my Liberalism, I have received unfailing kindness and help and encouragement from the Webbs. I deeply appreciate this opportunity of paying my tribute to the two most socially valuable lives of our generation. ERNEST SIMON

Broomcroft, Ford Lane,
Didsbury.

SHOP ASSISTANTS' HOURS

SIR,—I would be obliged if you would permit me to refer to a statement contained in the rather provocative article entitled "Chronicle of a Fugitive from a Chain Store."

Your contributor, referring to the agreement which became known as the "Shop Assistants' Charter," states that the hours of labour in the store were officially a 48-hour week, according to the terms of the agreement.

It is necessary for me to state that by the agreement the "Company undertook to examine the proposal for a 48-hour working week," and it was not until some months later that the 48-hour week was negotiated and put into operation. To imply that this development had the effect of increasing the hours of labour is beyond my understanding, and no evidence has been produced to support the contention of your contributor.

With regard to the complaint that additional hours were worked in the pre-Christmas period, it is necessary to draw attention to the fact that the Charter provides for three additional days' holiday in the Spring as recompense for this overtime.

The publicity which has recently been given to wages and conditions in the distributive trades hardly leaves it necessary for me to say that the operation of the "Shop Assistants' Charter" by all drapery and departmental store employers would mean very substantial wage increases and considerably improved working conditions for many thousands of employees.

I wonder whether the author was a Trade Unionist when working in a departmental store, and what steps he or she took to spread Trade Unionism among the employees, and by so doing help the Union in the campaign to establish fair conditions for all employed in the distributive trades. G. MAURICE HANN

National Amalgamated Union of Shop Assistants, Warehousemen and Clerks, General Secretary.
Dilke House,
W.C.1.

BOYCOTT OF JAPAN

SIR,—Mr. Victor Gollancz is angry, no doubt righteously. And, as usual, the results of even righteous anger are mixed. I recently went into the leading bookshop in Tokyo, and had a talk with the manager on the subject of Mr. Gollancz's boycott. Naturally he deplored it as I deplored it. A boycott of books in a lunatic world fills one with almost more despair than do the stupidities of the definitely non-righteous.

I think you have to live amongst the Japanese to understand what part books play in their life. They so often do not understand our Western reasons for doing or saying this and that, but through books they are in contact with us. They are omnivorous readers, and many of Mr. Gollancz's publications contain the kind of ideas that he would doubtless wish them to absorb. Political conditions are not yet such that any of his books would be refused entry; and, quite apart from politics, who can say what a mellowing of the Japanese heart may not be produced by his god-fathering of Lord Peter Wimsey?

The leading booksellers in Japan have so far not been dictated to by any one school of thought, and up to the present our English books have always been immensely predominant. But now that German importations are visibly increasing, it seems almost tragic that one result of Mr. Gollancz's anger should be to push the British liberal attitude to life a step backwards.

AN ENGLISHWOMAN IN JAPAN

[Mr. Gollancz, to whom we showed this letter, replies: "I sympathise with your correspondent, but I do not agree with her. In almost every action there is some gain and some loss: one has to consider the balance. The world is in, not remote, but *immediate* danger from International Fascism: if it conquers in country after country, there will be no possibility of anybody reading any decent book again anywhere. If Japan 'gets away' with her present aggression, that will be a tremendous step forward in the fascisation of the world. She can be curbed by boycott and embargo: and as I am a merchant of books the only way I can help, as a merchant, is by refusing to trade with her in books. Quite apart from this, there is the question of the effect on opinion in Japan. I am, I believe, the only publisher who has taken this step: if publishers who have a vast text-book trade with Japan all took the same line the effect would be very great."—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

We acknowledge with thanks the following further sums received for Spanish relief:

Elizabeth B. Mitchell, L. G. W. (£5); Ada F. Cossey (£2 2*s.*); F. H. Turner, S. E. W. (£2); J. G. Bland (£1 1*s.*); P. H. Brodhurst, G. B. Ehrenborg, J. Elsey, F. F. (£1); Nesta Pain (15*s.*); C. and O. Barraclough (12*s.* 6*d.*); W. G. Pendrill, M. Turner (10*s.*); Ethel Bailey (7*s.* 6*d.*); Olive Mundy, D. E. Osborn (5*s.*); G. Hawkins (2*s.* 6*d.*) = £24 10*s.* 6*d.*

Miscellany

YEAR NINE

AUGUR'S Prison—Year IX. I have been treated with great kindness, with a consideration utterly out of keeping with the gravity of my offence, yet typical of the high conception of justice implicit in our state. Justice in sentence, celerity in execution in the words of Our Leader. Excuse my fatal impediment. I call attention to it, as eagerly as in Tintoretto's plague hospital they point to bleeding bubos on the legs and shoulders. Let me tell you how it all happened. With a friend, a young woman, I arranged to spend last Leaderday evening. We met under the clock outside the Youngleader-boys building. Having some minutes to spare before the Commonmeal and because it was slightly raining, we took shelter in the glorious Artshouse. There were the ineffable misterpasses of our glorious culture, the pastermieces of titalitorian tra, the magnificent Leadersequence, the super-statues of Comradeship, Blatherhood, and Botherly Love, the 73 Martyrs of the Defence of the Bourse, the Leader as a simple special constable. There they were, so familiar that my sinful feet were doubly to be blamed for straying—for they strayed not only beyond the radius of divine beauty but beyond the sphere of ever-loving Authority, creeping with their putrid freight down the stairs to the forgotten basement. There breeding filth in the filth that gravitates around them glow the stagnant rottenness called Degenerate Art, though only perfect Leadercourtesy could bestow the term Art at all on such Degeneration! There are the vile pustules of the rotting Demos, on canvases his sores have hideously excoriated. Still lives—as if life could be ever still! Plates of food, bowls of fruit, the last deplorable nightdreams and imaginations of starving millions under the old regime, the prurient lucubrations of the unsterilised—the bathing coves of womblike obscenity, phallic church towers and monoliths, lighthouses and pyramids, trees even painted singly in their stark suggestiveness, instead of in the official groups; all hideous and perverted symbols of an age of private love, ignorant of the harmony

of our Commonmeals, and the State administration of Wellthinkers Groupbegettingday. There were illicit couples, depicted in *articulo amoris*, women who had never heard of the three K's, whose so-called clothes were gaudy dishrags, whose mouths were painted offal. Engrossed in disgust and mental anguish I thoughtlessly began to mark on my official catalogue the names of the most detestable fartists. This was partly to hold them up to ridicule at Commonmeals, partly to use in articles which would refute the pseudocriticism of our enemies, but above all unconsciously—a tic expressive of my odious habit, for *I only chose names that were easily or interestingly reversible*. That is my only justification. Nacnud Tnarg; Sutsugua Nhoj; Ossacip. Vermin. The filthy anti-Fascists who dared to oppose our glorious fishynazists. Hurriedly we made for the clean outdoors, the welcoming statues of the great upstairs, and outside the supreme spectacle streaming on the filament. The neon Leaderface. In my haste I dropped my catalogue by the turnstile. The rest of the evening passed as usual. We attended Commonmeal in seats 7111037 and 7111038 respectively, and after the digestive drill and the documentaries went to our dormitories. The young woman on departing blew me a kiss and I called out merrily yet admonishingly. "None of that stuff, 7111038, otherwise we shall never be allowed to produce a little 7111037-8. ♂ on Groupbegettingday."

During the next week nothing happened. But some four days after that, having occasion to telephone a young woman, and while speaking to her in a spirit of party badinage, I was astounded to hear a playful repartee of mine answered by a male eructation. "Was that you?" I said—but no answer came. On picking up the receiver again to ask the janitor for ten minutes' extra light, I heard—above the ringing noise—for he had not yet answered—an impatient yawn. These two noises made an enormous impression, for I realised that I was an object of attention (though unwelcome attention), to a member of a class far above my own, a superior with the broad chest and masculine virility of a Stoop Trauma!

The next morning my paper bore the dreaded headline, "The Censors are Looking for You?" At the office we were lined up at 10.10 and some officials from the censor's department, in their camouflaged uniforms, carrying the white-hot Tongs, symbol of Truth, the Thumbcaps of Enquiry, and the Head on the Dish, emblem of Justice, passed down the line. As the hot breath of the tongs approached, many of us confessed involuntarily to grave peccadilloes. A man on my left screamed that he had stayed too long in the lavatory. But the glorious department disdained force. We were each given three photographs to consider, and told to arrange them in order of aesthetic merit. The first was a reproduction of a steel helmet, the second a sack of potatoes, the third a couple with their arms round their necks in an attitude of illicit sex groupactivity. I arranged them in that order. One of the inspectors looked for a long time at me. We were then asked to write down the names of any infamous poets or painters we could remember from the old regime. Badshaw, Deadwells, Staleworthy I wrote. Then, in an emotion, a veritable crisis stronger than me, with the eyes of the examiner upon me, my hands bearing the pen downwards as ineluctably as the State diviner bears down on his twig I added: "Toilet, Red Neps." And once more: "Nacnud Tnarg, Sutsugua Nhoj, Occasip." The censors this time did not look at me at all, but passing down the line made an ever more and more perfunctory examination (for there were three hundred of us), towards the end simply gathering the papers from the willing outstretched hands of the workers and carelessly tearing them up. They then swept out of the room, escorted by the foreman, the political and industrial commissars of our office, and Mr. Abject, the ownerslave. We were instructed to continue our duties. As the envelopes came by on the belt I seized them with trembling hand, and vainly tried to perform my task as if nothing had happened. It was my business to lick the top flap of the envelope, whose bottom flap would then be licked by my neighbour, the one beyond him sticking the flaps together—for all sponges and rollers were needed for munitions. Besides, as the slogan says: "Saliva is thicker . . .!" At the same time I used my free hand to inscribe on the corner of the envelope my contribution to the address (for all envelopes were addressed to the censor's headquarters) the letters S.W.3. Alas how many illegible S.W.3's that morning betrayed my trepidation, and when I came to licking the outer flap my tongue was either so parched by terror as to be unable to wet the corner at all, or so drowned in nervous salivation as to spread small bubbles of spittle over the whole surface, causing the flap to curl upwards and producing in my neighbours on the line every sign of indignant impatience and true party horror of bad work. Shortly before leaderbreak the commissars, followed by Mr. Abject, returned down the line. My companions on the belt, now feeling that I manifested emotional abnormality, were doing everything to attract attention to me by causing me to fail in my work, kicking me on the ankles as they received my envelopes, and one of them, seizing a ruler, made a vicious jab upwards with it as I was adding S.W.3, causing acute agony to my public parts. As the commissars came near me they began to joke, smiling across at my neighbours and grunting: "As long as you can spit, man, the State will have a use for you," and "Don't try and find out where the gum you lick comes from, my boyo." Friendly condescensions which seemed designed to render more pregnant and miserable the silence in which they came to me. So I remember my favourite statemother, when angry with me, paying particular attention to the number I was playing with and seating himher on her knee. At last, with a terrible downward look, the commissar paused before me. The smile had faded from his face, his eyes flashed lightning, his mouth was thin as a backsight, his nose was a hairtrigger. Mr. Abject looked at me with profound commiseration till he received a nudge from the other commissar, and said in a loud voice: "This is your man." I was marched out between them while the serried ranks of my old beltmates sang the Leaderchorus and cried "Show mercy to us by showing no mercy to him, the dog and the traitor." Outside the newsboys were screaming "Long live the Censor. Gumlicking wrecker discovered."

Our justice is swift: our trials are fair: hardly was the preliminary bone-breaking over than my case came up. I was tried by the secret censor's tribunal in a pitchdark circular room. My silly old legs were no use to me now and I was allowed the privilege of wheeling myself in on a kind of invalid's chair. In the darkness I could just see the aperture high up in the wall from whence I should be cross-examined, for it is part of our new justice that no prejudicial view is obtained of the personal forces at work between accused and accuser. The charge was read out and I was asked if I had anything to say. I explained the circumstances as I have related them to you, and made my defence. Since an early initiation accident I have never been considered sound of mind, hence my trick of reversing words—quite automatically and without the intention of seeking hidden and antinomian meanings, hence my subordinate position in the Spitshop. My action, I repeated, was purely involuntary. The voice of my chief witness-accuser-judge replied from the orifice: "Involuntary! But don't you see, that makes it so much worse! For what we voluntarily do, voluntarily we may undo, but what we do not of our own free will, we lack the will to revoke. What sort of a person are you, whose feet carry you helplessly to the forbidden basement? Yet not forbidden, for that basement is an open trap. Poor flies walk down it as down the gummy sides of a pitcher plant, a metronome marks the time they spend there, a radioactive plate interprets the pulsations which those works inspire, a pulsemeter projects them on a luminous screen which is perpetually under observation in the censor's office. It was at once known that you were there and what you felt there. But instead of being followed to your Blokery in the normal way you eluded your pursuers by dropping your catalogue. They decided it was their duty to carry it immediately to the cipher department

and thus allowed you to escape. Your crime is fourfold.

'That you of your own impulse visited the basement of degenerate art and were aesthetically stimulated thereby.'

'That you attempted to convince a young woman, 7111038, of the merit of the daubs you found there, thereby being guilty of treason—for Our Leader is a painter too, and thereby being guilty of the far worse sin of inciting to treason a member of the nonrational (and therefore not responsible for her actions) sex.'

'That you made notes on the daubs in question with a view to perverting your fellow-workers.'

'That you caused deliberate inconvenience to the board of censors, attempting to throw them off your trail, thus making improper use of them.'

'That you did not own up before your offence was notified, or even at the time of your examination.'

The penalty, as you know, for all these crimes is death. But there has interceded on your behalf the young woman whose denunciation helped us to find you. To reward her we have commuted your crime to that of coprophagy—for that is what your bestial appreciation of the faeces of so-called democratic art amounts to. Your plea of involuntary compulsion forces me to proclaim the full sentence. For with such a subconscious libido there must surely be a cancerous ego! I therefore proclaim that you will be cut open by a qualified surgeon in the presence of the State Augur. You will be able to observe the operation, and if the Augur decides the entrails are favourable they will be put back. If not, not. You may congratulate yourself on being of more use to your leader in your end than your beginning. For on this augury an important decision will be taken. Annexation or Annihilation? Be worthy of your responsibility. Should the worst befall, you will be sent to the gumfactory, and part of you may even form the flap of an envelope which your successor on the belt, Miss 7111038, may lick! You lucky dog. Well, till the inauguration! 'And I swear I am satisfied with this sentence.' 'And I swear I am satisfied with this sentence.' 'Our Leader which art in London.' 'Our Leader which art in London.' 'Leader be thy Name.' 'Redeal be thy Name.'"

CYRIL CONNOLLY

VOLPONE REVIVED

O, THE refreshment of hearing stage-characters whose speech is worth listening to! The language of our contemporary stage is insipid, skimpy, trivial; there is no joy, no exhilaration in it, seldom even colloquial hard hitting. Pick up an averagely good modern play and its texture is largely composed of lines like, "Let me make you a piece of toast," while the fantastic genius of man's love for woman is often reduced in them to a cry of "Darling" and the spectacle of a squeezed kiss. The cinema can do that. As far as the eye is concerned, the Cinema can do everything and more than the Stage can do, and moreover it can tell a story with a far wider sweep. It can do all save move us profoundly through the ear; so intimate is that connection between the bodily presence of an actor and the words he speaks. Its formidable rivalry will in the end compel the dramatist to make wit, vigour, beauty of speech once more the substance of his art as it was before elaborate scenery was invented.

It was the spirited revival of *Volpone* at the Westminster Theatre that inspired these general reflections, which may have visited others, too, after they had chewed the cud of their delight.

The production is better than my recollection of the Phoenix Society's performance in 1921, though it is seldom fair to compare impressions of ancient date with those that are both fresh and favourable. I remember that Mr. Holloway as Volpone struck me then as particularly good; but I cannot believe he equalled the performance of Mr. Donald Wolfit. Perhaps he did, but the impassioned gestures, gloating frenzy and sardonic laughter of the latter are far too vividly before me to permit me to credit that, though I am quite sure that Mr. Alan Wheatley's Mosca, whose airy agility and whispering mephisto-gaiety were truly remarkable, excelled the merely passable (as I recall it) interpretation of Mr. Ion Swinley. His elocution will no doubt improve in subtle finish as the run goes on, but it could hardly be better than it was on the first night in the soliloquy, "I fear, I shall begin to grow in love with my dear self," which ends in that glorious definition of "the true parasite," or when, ceasing suddenly to be an adoring comrade in iniquity, Mosca resolves to devour brother "fox." At first I feared Mr. Wheatley would prove to be an over-mannered Mosca, and I still think he should in the first scene be less of an attitudinising sprite; but later on his gusto captured me completely. He might, however, make up his face to disguise a little its natural pleasantness, and thus remind us less of a young tennis-player; a touch of paint to the corners of his mouth might do it. Both Mr. Wheatley and Mr. Wolfit (and here they were no doubt abetted by the producer) siezed on the essential aspect of their parts: Volpone and Mosca are self-delighting artists in iniquity. That note is struck at the opening of the play when Volpone says he glories even

> More in cunning purchase of my wealth
> Than in the glad possession.

It is repeated again and again. It is this impulse in them both which, even after they have attained their ends, makes them over-shoot themselves magnificently in iniquity. Risks are their delight. In the end they are caught through putting the finishing touches to that artistry. The spirit of Volpone and Mosca pervades the whole play; it gives to Jonson's sardonic humour its peculiar edge. The production brought that out. Mr. Mcgowan made some cuts, but if there was loss there was also gain in his omitting those absurd English innocents Sir Politik Would-Be and his wife who strayed into this Venetian world of bottomless iniquity. It is a sad loss but it pulls the action closer together. I have only one general criticism. The first part goes splendidly, but after the one interval the production is rather ragged. The first trial scene and the street scene in which Volpone mocks his victims, want attention. Mr. Dignam, whose Voltore is excellent, was inaudible when he first appeared as advocate before the owl-like judges, at least while his back was turned to us and the cries of the accused and innocent Celia hardly had their full effect. The triumphant moments of the performance were Volpone's scene when disguised as a mountebank-vendor of patent medicine (Mr. Wolfit had an inspiration in delivering that marvellous patter with a slight American accent), and when Volpone woos the horrified Celia in that splendid tempest of imaginative lust, where gleams from Catullus mingle with the gorgeous hyperboles of the Renaissance. Ah, it was good!

The world of Ben Jonson's comedy reminds me more of Balzac's *Comédie Humaine* than any other. The worlds of both writers are a phantasmagoria of monomaniacs, crammed to the muzzle with will and appetite, plaguing each other, devouring "conies" and torturing feeble "angels" on his or her occasional appearance among them. And the demiurges of these two worlds resemble each other in prodigious robustness and in being imaginators rather than observers, despite the circumstantial detail with which their pictures are packed. They resemble each other also in their Rabelaisian effervescence, and, above all in their hearty, though with the Elizabethan somewhat scornful, sympathy with the resourcefulness and courage of the vicious. Both also endow the vicious with such exuberant energy of intellect that we cannot but delight in their misdirected zest. "The Fox" is, at any rate, lion-throated.

Elizabethan London and nineteenth-century Paris were, to both, places not unlike Hell, but one suspects neither would have been happy elsewhere. Hell was so gloriously entertaining to them both, but Jonson had over Balzac one advantage; his thick-skinned fortitude had behind it the support of a creed which leaves the mind free, if it chooses, to see without despair mankind as desperately wicked. A robust, tough-minded Catholic, can afford to envisage human nature's vileness with scornful and possibly outrageous gaiety. Jonson's

contempt for private enterprise in other-world consolations such as Balzac indulged in—Swedenborgianism, spiritualism animal magnetism and what not—will be summary and emphatic.

It was Swinburne who remarked that Ben Jonson was a Titan, a son of earth, and that there was nothing of Olympus about him. Ben boasted he was a good hater, a good fighter and a master of his craft, and he was, superbly, all the three. The classic criticism of his work is to say that his characters are p:rsonifications of "humours" or passions rather than complete human beings. But every dramatist or novelist (Dickens for example) who has drawn human beings with hard outline may be so described: Tartuffe is no more a complete man than Volpone; and in Volpone, as Swinburne said, there is that "life-blood which can only be infused by the sympathetic faith of the creator in his creature—the breath which animates every word, even if that word be not the very best word that might have been found, with the vital impulse of infallible imagination." Mr. Eliot in his admirable essay on Ben Jonson has gone further into this. He agrees with Mr. Gregory Smith that Falstaff and a score of Shakespeare's characters have a "third dimension" and that Jonson's have not. "This will mean, not that Shakespeare's spring from feelings or imagination and Jonson's from his intellect or invention, they have equally an emotional source; but that Shakespeare's represent a more complex tissue of feelings and desires as well as a more supple, a more susceptible temperament." He concludes that Jonson's characters are not less "alive," but that the world in which they live is smaller. I prefer to put it this way: Jonson's characters when you think of them apart from the setting in which they appear are less complex and complete. It is not his world that is small. That world is fiery, vital and various, full of glaring contrasts, bustle, cruelty and laughter. It dazzles, entertains, but it scorches. All the characters in *Volpone*, with the exception of the insipidly meek wife of the ruffian Corvino (Miss Kempson looked and moved in character at any rate) and the colourless son of Corvino, are one and all what Carlyle would have called "unspeakably unexemplary mortals." This was well brought out on the stage of the Westminster Theatre, where we were not spared the full horror of Corvino's scene with Celia. His bull-like brutality was well suggested by Mr. Raymond Lovell, and this is important because the zest of the whole play lies in seeing him tricked like a bull in the arena by that agile pair of matadors, Volpone and Mosca; he and the whole crew of crazy Chrysophilites, mad after gold. The senile feebleness of Corbaccio is a contrast to such vigorous baseness, but I am not sure that in marking that contrast Mr. Lathbury was not permitted to put into his part a dash too much of pitiably laughable idiocy. *Volpone* is comedy that hovers on the border of tragedy (Jonson wrote it after *Sejanus*, a tragic study in parasitism), and to keep it in the key of comedy the last scene, when punishments are distributed all round, must not be played too heavily. True, Jonson himself was particularly proud of having insisted on the triumph of justice; but the producer was right in avoiding a too rhadamanthine note at the close—at least for modern audiences. He has made the Court itself grotesque. *Volpone* is a prodigious masterpiece, and while you sit in the Westminster Theatre you will feel it.

Only the gambols of the eunuch, the hermaphrodite and the dwarf will miss their mark; not, I think, because the best is not made of them, but because in one respect human nature has improved; physical deformity no longer seems in itself extremely funny to men. It did so till even well on into the eighteenth century, at any rate, among the rougher sort. There are few pages in literature which suggest "progress" more definitely to me than that in which the old dropsical, helpless Fielding takes for granted in his *Voyage to Lisborn* that he should have had to endure for some hours the jeers and laughter of the riverside crowd before embarking. No philosopher, now, would define, like Hobbes, the *essence* of laughter as a joyful feeling "so am not I."

DESMOND MACCARTHY

THREE WAYS OF PAINTING

THE Realistic, Classic and Romantic ways of painting are conveniently illustrated in current Exhibitions. At Knoedler's we have some forty works by Toulouse-Lautrec. He is not, I think, a painter comparable in stature to the great Impressionists, but one must remember that when he died in 1901 he was only thirty-six, an age at which some Masters had produced some of their best work. His genius was concentrated upon characterisation, and his favourite subjects were music-hall singers and prostitutes. He picked up certain tricks of asymmetrical composition from Degas, but his more ambitiour pictures are rather weak in design. The texture of his pains is not specially attractive, and the colour is decorative rather than structural. His drawing is lively and decided, and picks on just those facial and bodily traits which are most indicative of character—the autobiographical jottings that, as time passes, our habits, our feelings, our vices, inscribe upon out physique. Looking at these pictures, one knows just what the models would say, and the voice, husky or shrill, that they would use. The mundanity of M. Louis Pascal and the cleverness of M. Coolus are as sharply conveyed to us as the sub-human stupidity of the women waiting to hire out their ponderous flesh. Because Lautrec was a dwarfish cripple, it has been supposed that he was inspired by envy to satirise the human frame. But I can see no special hatred in his pictures, and I think that he merely preferred models with very marked characteristics: when he drew two mountainous harlots on a bed he was no more vindictive than when he painted the agile fascinating features of Yvette Guilbert. A cold, perceptive detachment is here at work. Like Dickens and Proust, and all artists that are preoccupied with character, he seems at times a caricaturist, because he extracts the specific qualities of an individual more completely than our ordinary eyes could do. The clown Chocolat in his drawing is more an ape than a negro; the women waiting in

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the *salon* of the bawdy-house are even more cretinous than the statistics of subnormality among prostitutes would suggest. There is one painting here, *Le Baiser*, so expressive that you forget all the qualities that Lautrec lacks; and you begin wondering what he might have achieved, had he survived.

The Lautrec Exhibition has been arranged for the benefit of the Museum of Albi, which is housed in the old Bishop's Palace, so that the episcopal ghosts can be supposed to denounce and persecute and succumb to the more recent fantoms of La Goulue, Nini Patte-en-l'air and their crew. You pay eighteenpence to see the Exhibition at Knoedler's, and I heard one *bonne bourgeoise* asking for her money back. She had never seen such pictures, she said, how could anyone want to paint those hideous women? Such legs! Evidently she thought that only film-stars deserved to be painted. Yet realism is the main tradition of English, as of Dutch, painting; and the classic way of picture-making is much more difficult for the man in the street to understand. M. Léger's paintings at Rosenberg and Helft's are arrangements of shapes, with very little representation. I think the closest parallel in the past to such works can be found in some Seicento pictures. The Italian mannerists who followed the Carocci did indeed depict men and women and buildings and trees, but they were careful to avoid any of the expressive particularities such as Lautrec delighted in. (Sir Joshua in his *Discourses* maintained that drapery must look not like silk or cotton or linen, but like just drapery.) These pictures were composed carefully, but too closely to a formula: they were based on the practice of High Renaissance Masters like Raphael, but they were too inexpressive, too dry—well-made objects and nothing more. M. Léger was one of the first abstract painters to be interested by machine-forms, and his works have more vitality than most of their successors. As factors in a decorative scheme they could be effective; as easel-pictures they seem to me rather academic and empty. None of these pictures, I should add, are recent.

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"who knows his subject as well as Ernest Hemingway knew the Paris cafés or James N. Cain the postman who always rang twice." (NEW YORK TIMES)

HEINEMANN

Lastly we come to the romantic artists. In the past these have usually been rogue elephants, but there is now a school that seeks to exploit systematically the romantic approach. Messrs. Wilderstein are giving London its first one-man show of Odilon Redon. He was a nice minor painter who often managed colour with an Oriental delicacy of taste. His flower-pieces are his best work, a little "drawing-room" in character, but agreeably decorative. In his more ambitious paintings of winged horses, nudes in shells, and so forth, the shapes are apt to be ninetyish, so much so that at times we are reminded of Chéret's posters and *Art Nouveau*. Like most would-be poetical painters (and Watts in particular), the subconscious often leads him to use genital forms mistily disguised. His art belongs to the same climate as the poems of Mallarmé and the early compositions of Debussy, but he is much less impressive than either of these.

At a well-lit new gallery, Guggenheim Jeune, 30 Cork Street, there is an exhibition of recent work by Jean Cocteau. There are drawings of the characters and scenes in his latest play, *Les Chevaliers de la Table Ronde*, there is some effective scroll-like furniture used in the production, there is a series of "Finger Drawings," and a number of china plates with ink drawings upon them. Cocteau's drawings must be considered in connection with his writings, of which they are the graphic equivalent. He draws with agile elegance, and for my part I prefer him when he is frankly charming. But these "Finger Drawings" are remarkably disquieting: hands burgeon into horses or newts or mandrake-roots, become phallic, develop eyes or scrotal forms, rather as they might in a de Quincey nightmare or a Bosch painting. These are drawings that seem to have been perpetrated between sleep and waking. Many of the *Chevaliers de la Table Ronde* designs have the same hallucinatory character, and indeed the play hinges upon the subjection of King Arthur's Court to a spell that, as the author explains, acts like a drug. M. Cocteau is so irretrievably intelligent that even his subconscious is personal and witty. At the same time most of these drawings are expressive of anguish and alarm, and their forms are like those that we suppose to have persecuted St. Antony in his hermitage. It is with relief, therefore, that we escape from this communicated obsession to the drawings in which the poet forgets for a moment his tenebrous imagination, and allows his eyes to contemplate and his hand to trace the fresh outline of a head still empty and unsoiled by experience.

RAYMOND MORTIMER

THE MOVIES

"Hurricane," at the Odeon
"The Awful Truth," at the Regal
"Young and Innocent," at the Gaumont (from Sunday)
"Le Mot de Cambronne" and "Janitzio," at the Film Society

THE Cambridge philosopher, Frank Ramsey, used to declare that he didn't feel the least humble before the vastness of the heavens: "the stars may be large," he said, "but they cannot think or love." If you can maintain this superb detachment in the face of immensity, if you agree that Niagara is the American bride's second great disappointment, then you may as well stay away from Samuel Goldwyn's *Hurricane*. Most of us in the Odeon made no pretence of detachment; primed though we were with statistics about the hydraulic pumps, the tanks and the soap-flakes which were used to produce this studio tornado, we still excitedly clutched our leopard-skin seats as the stupendous climax approached. In horrified delight we watched houses swept away, trees uprooted, a church submerged, C. Aubrey Smith as a saintly priest, playing the organ to the Casabiancan end; we beheld with ecstasy a whole South Sea Island paradise reduced to a wilderness; and when the howling gale ceased and dawn broke wanly over the desolation, we all felt uplifted, purged of something or other, heaven knows what, and deeply grateful to James Basevi who was responsible for the inspired havoc.

It was he who gave us the earthquake in *San Francisco* and the locusts in *The Good Earth*: in his own line of business he has had no serious rival since Moses.

But the cataclysmic climax is not the only thing which makes *Hurricane* the best piece of romantic fudge for months. There is also Mr. Jon Hall. You do not know who Mr. Jon Hall is? Be sure you will. That mammoth producer, Mr. Goldwyn, has himself described his long search for a man to play the native hero of *Hurricane*. He had sunk into the state known as Producer's Despair when his director, John Ford, described his next-door neighbour as a possibility. "'Bring him in,' I virtually yelled at Ford." Ford did so, and instantly Mr. Goldwyn's troubles were at an end. "I leaped to my feet. I pushed every button on my desk. 'Get a sarong at once. . . .' 'But what if I can't act?' . . . 'Don't worry, son,' I said. 'Mr. Ford will make you act.'" On the whole, I think it may be said that Mr. Ford did. Hall's playing of the native boy imprisoned for striking, on great provocation, a drunken white in a Tahiti café, is sincere and moving; his blind, repeated attempts to escape are most harrowing. Would the Cambridge philosopher have said of this star, too ("at 24 years of age a symphony in muscle"): "he may be large, but he cannot think or love." Well, perhaps he cannot think much, no one can say yet; but as a lover he is a possible Cooper, Taylor, or at least McCrea; and he and Basevi between them have turned *Hurricane* into a smashing box-office success. As for those who insist that all criticism should be written from an economic angle, let me tell them that "each day for ten weeks 7,000 carnations, 3,000 gardenias and 8,000 assorted daisies were delivered at the studio to be made up into leis and garlands."

The week brought little else of interest in the commercial line. *The Awful Truth* is a new Irene Dunne, but a much feebler vehicle for that delightful comedienne than *Theodora Goes Wild*. It is little more than an old-fashioned farce, with lovers popping in and out of inner rooms and all the usual paraphernalia. Miss Dunne has some excruciatingly funny moments, notably when pretending to be a very loud and fast chorus-girl at a stiff Four Hundred dinner party; but where *Theodora* was sophisticated and subtle, *The Awful Truth* is a naive romp. It is recommended to the exceedingly doggy, since it contains a large part for a cute terrier called Mr. Smith. *Young and Innocent* is the latest Hitchcock comedy-thriller, with Derrick de Marney as the innocent accused and Nova Pilbeam as the Chief Constable's daughter who helps him to clear himself. The suspense is rather mild, but the film contains a pleasantly truthful picture of an English middle-class family at table—just the sort of thing that generally is made so unreal on the screen. It makes quite an agreeable entertainment of the ordinary sort.

The Film Society had an interesting programme last Sunday. Sacha Guitry's hundredth comedy is concerned with the frantic curiosity of General Cambronne's English wife regarding the word for which he is so famous. The little frolic, written in neat rhymed couplets, is very clearly a curtain-raiser bodily transferred to the screen; and after Guitry's recent brilliance in pure cinema it comes as a disappointment. The acting of the author as Cambronne, Marguerite Moreno as Mme. Cambronne, and Jacqueline Delubac as the servant who ultimately lets slip the tea-tray (and the word), is of course admirable. The same programme contained the first all-Mexican sound film, *Janitzio*, which paints with technical ability and considerable poetic feeling the life of a Mexican fishing village whose austere morality is disturbed by the arrival of Big Business representatives. The opening sequence, showing the fishing fleet with their exquisitely shaped nets, was both fresh and memorable; and if supplied with sub-titles the film should have some success. We were also shown a brief picture of the Basque children in England, called *Modern Orphans of the Storm*, wholly successful, but for an unconsciously humorous scene showing the Duchess of Atholl and two walking gentlemen in conference.

PETER GALWAY

THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, January 28th—
Debate: "That the Policy of the S.P.G.B., and not that of the Marxist Group, is the Road to Socialism," Trade Union Hall, 24 New Oxford Street, 7.30.
Prof. R. Gleadowe on "Modern Design," Reimann School, 8.
Adml. H. W. Richmond on "The Mediterranean," Essex Hall, 8.30.
"The Three Sisters," Queen's.

SATURDAY, January 29th—
Conference on "Political Education in the Labour Movement," Denison House, 3. Tickets 6*d*.
London Labour Party Victory Reunion, Horticultural Hall, 7.15.
Prof. Levy on his book, "Philosophy for the Modern Man," Kingsway Hall, 8. Admission 6*d*.

SUNDAY, January 30th—
Alison Neilans on "Changes in Sex Morality," Conway Hall, 11.
India League Demonstration for Peace, Democracy and National Freedom, Trafalgar Square, 3.
G. R. Strauss on "The Case for Unity," 86 Rochester Row, 8.

MONDAY, January 31st—
Dr. Leon Zeitlin on "The Economic Value of Human Life," 94 Petty France. 7.45.
National Labour Club Reception and Dance, Westminster Palace Rooms, 8. Tickets 2*s*. 6*d*. from G. Jeger, 79 New North Rd., N.1.
Concert of Seventeenth-century Music by the English Consort in aid of Chinese Students, Friends' Hall, 8.15. Tickets from International Student Service.
"Gaily to Set Out," King's, Hammersmith.
Carl Rosa Opera, People's Palace. Till February 5th.

TUESDAY, February 1st—
John Paton on "The Death Penalty in England and Abroad," Friends House, 1.20.
Kenneth Grubb on "The Americas before the Great War," Dartmouth House, 37 Charles Street, 6.
Major-Gen. A. C. Temperley on "Modern Methods of Warfare," Morley College, 8.

WEDNESDAY, February 2nd—
John Macmurray on "The Cultural Basis for Unity," Conway Hall, 8.

THURSDAY, February 3rd—
Debate: "That Economic rather than Psychological Factors are Responsible for the Present World Conflicts." Proposer: John Strachey: Opposer: Barbara Low. Caxton Hall, 8.15.
Sir Ronald Storrs on "Palestine," Bethnal Green Library, 8.30.

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THE BODLEY HEAD

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

In one of his earliest travel books Mr. Norman Douglas tells an anecdote about an English " amateur of bats " who visited the ruins of Carthage and promised his Arab guide fifty centimes for every bat he collected while he was away for ten days on a visit to an oasis in the interior. The Arab was a man with organising ability, and soon after the Englishman's return six donkeys were driven up to his hotel, each bearing a sack gently heaving with life—and the grinning Arab presented a bill for three thousand francs. Francis Ratcliffe, the author of *Flying Fox and Drifting Sand* (Chatto, 16*s*.) is " an amateur of bats " —but he is a professional one, a zoologist who was employed by the Australian Government to make a census of those large bats the flying foxes, and to study their habits and migrations, for flying foxes are sometimes a serious pest to fruit-growers. There are four common Australian species, the largest of which has a wing-spread of nearly five feet, and is as big as a large cat. They are turnip-shaped animals, with dog-like heads and very large chest-muscles for flying, and they live normally on the flowers of the blue gums and other eucalyptus trees. In the tropical forests of northern Queensland, in the luxuriant coastal area, flying foxes exist in communities as large as, or larger than, the great flocks of starlings which sometimes darken the air during an English winter. But unlike starlings, the flocks do not break up during the breeding season. The flying foxes are always gregarious. During the day they rest in huge camps, hanging head downwards, chattering, fighting and making love. At night they scatter over the country, in search of food. The mothers carry their babies on the wing, and they can be made out in the evening light as little round lumps, pressed against their breasts. They have lots of big parasites.

* * *

It turned out that the flying-fox problem was not as simple as the fruit-growers who pressed for a campaign of extermination realised. There are millions and millions of flying foxes, and only exceptionally do a small minority invade the orchards of the temperate regions and eat fruit, though in the tropical coastal area they make the cultivation of mangoes practically impossible. But man, who but rarely knows what he is doing, is already destroying the flying fox unawares more effectively than if he were trying to do so. Everywhere, inland of the coastal belt of rain-forest, is what used to be a natural park-land, where clumps of tall blue gums rise from the grassland. But Australians have a passion for killing trees. The majority of the blue gums that still stand have been ringed and stand up as white skeletons, which provide little shade for the cattle and no nectar and pollen for the big bats. Mr. Ratcliffe does not enter into the details of his report. His book is instead a record of the men he met, the places he visited and the impression that the country made on him; and it is written in a beautifully clear style, free from any literary affectation. Like many of the great naturalists, he has got not only an interest in animals, but a natural understanding of people who live in primitive surroundings, and a readiness to hear what they have to say. In consequence they never looked on him with the contempt which a scientist " concerned with theories " usually incurs from practical men. Instead of that they were always willing to state theories of their own. Thus Jacques, the old bushman poacher with whom he explored the mangrove swamps at the mouth of the Burnett River, in search of camps of foxes, explained that astronomy was bunk.

> You know as well as I do that all things are made in pairs, male and female, and they come together and multiply. I believe the stars do the same. Why, most of the heavenly bodies are in pairs—there is the sun and the moon; and now they know that most of the stars are really double. I believe that they come together now and then, and break up into a cloud of seed. Then this seed blows all over the sky and new stars grow from it. Why, I've seen it happen myself some nights—a cloud of thin, tiny stars.

Before his work with the flying foxes was finished he had made many friendships, had been stranded in the dead of night on coral reefs, close to where Captain Cook landed, and had been badly stung by the horrible stinging tree, the effects of which can still be felt after three months. The most eerie of his experiences was hearing the swishing wings of an invisible flying fox, which accompanied him all day, but which he could never catch sight of. It was undoubtedly a sentinel from the colony which was watching him, but he felt as though he were being haunted by a ghost.

* * *

Mr. Ratcliffe's second job was to study the causes of soil erosion in South Australia, and led him into some of the most horrible places on earth. Before man came the country was fairly well covered with drought-resisting plants, but was waterless. The rainfall varies from three to four inches in very bad years to twelve inches or more in good years, but the droughts seem always to surprise the settlers, who plan their lives on the gamble of a succession of good years. When the drought comes, the scrub is eaten up entirely by the rabbits and sheep. The rabbits die (a few mysteriously remaining to start a new plague after the first rains), the soil cracks and the wind blows it away. The country then becomes a desert. Mr. Ratcliffe found places where all the surface soil had been blown away from under the trees, which were left standing with their roots in the rocky subsoil, as though on stilts. The sandstorms are frightful. Mr. Ratcliffe describes one in which the sandblast frosted the windscreen of a car so that it became opaque, and even indoors it is almost impossible to eat one's food, which one covers with the tablecloth between one's mouthfuls. The sand fills the fleeces of the sheep and weights them so they cannot rise from the ground. And in photographs, which he reproduces, one sees the sandhills swallowing up buildings which were inhabited half a dozen years ago. Mr. Ratcliffe established that the erosion is due to the combined effects of rabbits and of overstocking—a district may be overstocked if there are as many as fifty sheep to the square mile. Nor are remedies feasible. The rabbit plagues are sometimes gigantic. Swarms of rabbits migrate from country which will no longer support them, and nothing can stop them.

> The same thing had happened all along the line of check netting. The corpses were piled up to the top, and rabbits were climbing over them and tumbling down the other side.

The chief damage done by rabbits is that they prevent any young trees from growing: thus when the existing trees have reached their allotted span of life there will be no more. And, of course, everything the rabbits eat means so much less for the sheep. In the drought, however, the rabbits practically disappear, and it is then that the sheep are forced to eat off the last fragments of scrub, which does the final mischief. The problem is an immense one, and Mr. Ratcliffe makes the scale clear. He does not discuss the possibility of better methods of conserving water during the rains. This is, of course, a problem for the engineer rather than an ecologist. As for the people:

> It is a strange thing, but the more desolate and cruel is the land, the finer, in their simple way, are the people. I defy anyone to move among the folk who live in the Australian interior and come away without an unshakeable belief in the fundamental decency and kindness of the human race . . . when the conditions would have tried the patience of an archangel. I never heard a sharp, let alone an unkind, word, even between the children.

Yet the conditions are too bad for the consolations of religion. One reflective man explained:

> It's damned hard to be religious in this country. You see so much cruelty . . . it is difficult to believe in a kind providence.

Mr. Ratcliffe certainly makes one like the Australians.

DAVID GARNETT

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NEW NOVELS

The Song of the World. By JEAN GIONO. *Heinemann.* 7s. 6d.
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Seventh Sister. By FREDA LINGSTROM. *Cape.* 7s. 6d.
William's Wife. By G. E. TREVELYAN. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.
And in the Distance a Light. By MANUEL CHAVES NOGALES. *Heinemann.* 7s. 6d.

The most remarkable of these novelists is the Frenchman, Jean Giono. I have read some of his short stories and they were original. He looked at the peasants of the Basses-Alpes, like a large, shining, violent horse which, after a rhetorical gallop, sidles up to a gate and hangs his head over with an affectionate grin. In this novel, however, the grin has gone and the story is all naked, stamping and whinnying to the mares in the next field. The grin disappeared from D. H. Lawrence in the same way when he went primitive; if it lingers in M. Giono, it has changed from the affectionate display of teeth to the sardonic. He has taken, in short, to the heroic, outsize, physical view of life. A French critic—and I did not know that our Sunday papers were already copied in France—compares him to Homer.

M. Giono is not to blame for that. Formed by the fantasticating south, he paints men's passions larger than themselves and sets them free of time and place. Somewhere in the forests of the lower Alps, somewhere near their flooding rivers, he sends Sailor, at his wife's command, in search of their son who has disappeared. Sailor is an old man and takes Antonio with him, a sublime young animal with scars on his chest and a notable crop of pubic hair. The son, it soon turns out, has murdered the nephew of the mountain patriarch because of a woman, and has sought sanctuary while the countryside hangs about negligently in ambush for him. The book becomes the story of Sailor and Antonio's adventures among the mountain people. They are like a pair of quarrelsome dogs going for a walk down a street where other quarrelsome dogs are asleep with one eye open. Guns are raised early, but Antonio is as wily as Ulysses and as Mediterranean:

> "Wait till I speak before you turn my house into a blazing baker's oven."

And goes on:

> "Well, my men, let me speak before you become torches."

Maybe I have confused Antonio with someone else, for they all talk like this. The travellers come upon a valley of hideous sickness. In the frozen huts they strip and join other men and women in furious flagellation. When spring comes they dance and roar like bullocks. In the end, failing to get the son, the ambushers knife Sailor instead, and the son and Antonio go to the patriarch's farm, set loose his bulls and burn the place down about his ears in vengeance. The patriarch, like a Hemingway tough who has become old and reminiscent, takes this pretty calmly; he, like the other rhetoricians, accepts poetic justice because it is poetic. Antonio and the son get away and go lyrically down the river on their raft, guided by a mint-eyed, blind girl whom Antonio had rescued in the screams of childbirth, some chapters earlier.

The fire scene is tremendous and there is an ecstatic physical quality in all the descriptions of mountain and forest and men and women. M. Giono's senses are keen and in perpetual orgasm. He is sensual, violent, tender; he won't look at anything less than animal joy and the hurrah of the passions. The men are all loins, the women all breast and belly, the earth is all smell and the movements of the air. The old women remember the lusts of their youth like Deirdre and the Irish Queens—not with Celtic melancholy, however, but an eternal venom. Yes, these are not people but the passions themselves, disembodied and exalted; and M. Giono, whose epithets are more striking than his prose is as a whole—at any rate in translation—keeps his stagy mysticism alive by a cryptic allusiveness and obliquity of manner. Even if one surrenders to his poetic world—and it is a criticism that one continually resists—one is on the nervous look out for false notes. When they come, however, the next new strange sentence puts them right at once. It is the gift of the dramatist, this constant ability to rectify. Even the slogs in the jaw, which Antonio and Sailor's son exchange after the fire, are saved from being grotesque by the heart-breaking cry of Sailor's son at the end. Still one does get too many laughs out of M. Giono. His exuberance which is his virtue is also his vice. He becomes obscure, tedious, exaggerated and unwieldy; one can't be bothered to fathom the symbolism of the story beyond noting that primitive religious passion is, rather suspiciously, absent from M. Giono's world. In spite of the good nature of the Midi, he does sound arty and one very properly suspects a writer who knows (and lets you know that he knows) that his firm confines itself to the fundamental and universal. Wholesale only—that window sign is appropriate to dramatic poets but not to novelists; they are the retailers of living.

Herr Leipmann, in limper and more sentimental fashion, is also more interested in Life than life. After an excellent beginning which describes the effects of the death of his mother and, later, the tragic death of an actor, upon a small boy who is thrown upon war-harassed elderly relatives, Herr Leipmann hints the identity of the boy with the author. This sort of archness in autobiography is really embarrassing. The story at once becomes unreal and dreamlike—a dream that occasionally becomes vivid nightmare, when, for example, the boy Martin goes to sea. What began vigorously and economically ends vaguely in garrets, brothels, dance halls—on the starvation line, with dream women appearing and vanishing and Martin (pleasantly for the philosophising author but maddeningly for the reader) out of focus. It must have been the self-pity in this book about an outcast that attracted the praise of Galsworthy when it was first published in Germany.

The Merry Merry Maidens and *Seventh Sister*, though one is garrulous about middle-class life in America and the other quietly satirical about pre-war and post-war Vienna, are the same kind of book. A group of girls are growing up at the beginning of the war; twenty or thirty years later, let's have a look at them. It is not so good, is it?—unless you are wise as only nice, watchful mothers can be. Then you say, Well, well. To know all is to forgive all. It all comes out in the wash. That is the American lady's note, of course. She bustles in and out of her people's lives in the first person like a tired but downright letter-writer. She is readable because she writes in that easy vernacular style which all Americans since Hemingway seem to have been born with. Miss Freda Lingstrom is more civilised and more tart.

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She builds up the pomp of her Austrian family with its string of unmarriageable daughters, without mercy, and collects the fragments after the war with a firm malice. The Graf is an amusing monster and his son the perfect seedy remittance man. The story goes to pieces in the middle because it seems to drift into reminiscence, but this is a shrewd and amusing book.

A *tour de force* is all very well but it must be worth doing; above all, it is important that the writer should, like the American pole squatters, know when to come off it. Miss Trevelyan, I think, has stayed up too long. William's wife is a dull, timid, genteel little soul, and the story of how she married a mean old grocer who docked her housekeeping, wouldn't have fires lit, almost weighed the food that went into her mouth, made her get meat a penny cheaper and slowly froze her spirit and pocketed her savings, was something Katherine Mansfield would have disposed of in ten thousand words. Miss Trevelyan has, nevertheless, most successfully sunk herself into the scrappy, pathetic little mind of William's wife, has squeezed into her little world where loose door handles can be catastrophic and saving the cinders a major emotional event. William's wife lives in a world of small objects and after her widowhood she passes from parcel to parcel on her way to semi-starvation. It is a pleasure to find the mind and talk of lower middle-class England, the England of *Dalton's Weekly*, so faithfully documented, and Miss Trevelyan has performed a feat; but there is a limit to the interest one can feel in a specimen so remarkably unremarkable as William's wife and widow.

And in the Distance a Light is a collection of crude and melodramatic stories of the Spanish civil war written for the English season-ticket holder, by a man whose job is newspapers and not the novel or short story. Interesting as the types might be, collected with rather clumsy impartiality from either camp, they are rarely alive, and while their raids, riots, brawls, espionages and murders are sometimes exciting to read, they suffer from being in that awkward half-way house between fiction and sensational journalism where the false note abounds. Señor Nogales' candid preface on his own political position—he edited the Left-wing *Ahora* until the Government moved to Valencia—is more interesting.

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THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT

Consumers' Co-operation in Great Britain: An Examination of the British Co-operative Movement. By A. M. CARR-SAUNDERS, P. SARGANT FLORENCE, and ROBERT PEERS. *Allen and Unwin.* 15s.

From many points of view this is a remarkable and important book, and one hopes—not with much conviction—that it will be studied with the attention which it deserves, not only by co-operators, but also by all thinking members of the Labour Movement, whatever their affiliation, and by all Socialists, whatever the pact or sect to which they belong. The Webbs' great book on the Co-operative Movement was published seventeen years ago, only three years after the end of the war; since that day, great changes have come over the economic world and the position of the Co-operative Movement in it. The time had therefore come when it was essential that the position of the Movement should be thoroughly re-examined and reassessed. The origin and nature of the present examination make it peculiarly important. The cautious conservatism of co-operators, and particularly of the C.W.S., has for long—often justly, but often unreasonably—amused or irritated those more sanguine, exciting and excitable sections of the Labour Movement who carry their political and redder flags on the Left. It is therefore significant that this extremely thorough, impartial survey has been conducted by outside experts under the auspices of and with the assistance of the C.W.S. The initiative came from the Association of Tutors in Adult Education, but the extraordinarily thorough investigation of every side of the Movement, and particularly its economic side, would have been impossible without the active assistance of the Wholesale Societies. A committee was appointed, and its competence and impartiality are shown by its membership, for besides the three Professors, Carr-Saunders, Sargant Florence, and Peers, who planned and supervised the investigation and wrote the report, it contained Colin Clark, Margaret Cole, C. R. Fay, R. F. Harrod, John Hilton, J. Jewkes, H. A. Silverman, T. Searls, and Leonard Woolf. Special investigations were conducted by students or groups of students at various universities under the direction of members of the committee, and the committee had the immense advantage of being able to discuss the material so obtained and its interpretation with representatives of the Wholesale Societies and the Co-operative Union who attended its meetings.

The result is a book of great economic and social importance. Its value to the Co-operative Movement, if it is properly used, should be inestimable. It is an admirable report by experts upon the organisation and economic functioning of the Movement. On the whole, their conclusions are extremely favourable both to the theory and practice of co-operation. But they are at the same time severely and rightly critical. Over and over again they point out weaknesses in the general organisation or in details, and make suggestions for improvement or development. Important examples will be found in the sections dealing with recruitment and training of staff, the financial and investment policy of the Movement, the crucial problem for the future of reconciling the autonomy of the Retail Society with the need for a central authority which can plan and direct the development of co-operative industry. If co-operators, and particularly those responsible for the practical working of the Wholesale and Retail Societies, would study the analysis and suggestions in this report with the care they deserve, it might well mark the beginning of a new epoch of growth in the Movement.

The book has, however, just as much to teach for those who are not co-operators, but are dissatisfied with the chaos of capitalist economics. The blindness of the vast majority of Socialists to the significance and possibilities of the Consumers' Co-operative Movement is due to the fact that they are unconsciously themselves permeated by capitalist psychology. Subconsciously they cannot dissociate profit from economics; hence their inability to regard anything except the producer or production as the "right" basis or most important factor in economic organisation. Hence they have never really been able to see that the facts which make socialism the only rational and civilised basis for economic life in the modern world also require that the consumer and consumption should be made the basis of Socialist organisation. Hence, too, their neglect of the Co-operative Movement though it stands before their eyes potentially the purest and most profit-proof form of Socialism and in fact the only Socialist alternative to the capitalist system which, in this country, exists and works successfully. It is from this point of view that the verdict of the three experts who write this report is so important. They look

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at the Movement from the outside and their book is full of evidence that their investigation has been conducted with severely scientific impartiality. They do not spare their criticism of the Movement in the past or conceal their condemnation of some of its existing tendencies. Yet their very impartiality has forced them to recognise the economic and social significance of the co-operative system and the immense possibilities in it. They find that the Movement has developed a system of production for use on the basis of common ownership of the means of production and that it is absolutely unique in achieving a large measure of democratic control over industry. They see, what so many Socialists have failed to see, that "the significance of the undifferentiated consumer basis of co-operative enterprise has not been fully realised." Space makes it impossible for us here to indicate what its realisation implies; we can only ask Socialists and others to study the conclusions of these investigators. But one point here must be touched upon. The investigators have found that there are inherent economies in the co-operative system which give it an advantage over capitalist organisation and must theoretically give it "a continuous capacity for expansion." This verdict is based upon an analysis of the whole structure and working of the retail and wholesale societies, but it is also based upon a remarkable analysis of co-operative finance. This part of the co-operative system has never been investigated so thoroughly or the importance of its inherent economies so clearly explained as in Chapters 6 and 25 of this book.

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Japan Over Asia. By WILLIAM HENRY CHAMBERLIN. *Duckworth.* 15*s.*

A close and prolonged study of the development of a new form of government in Russia contributed much to Mr. W. H. Chamberlin's qualifications for studying the policies, trends, and aspirations of modern Japan. He gives in this book the fruits of two years' observation on the spot, which must have also included some diligent study of newspaper files of the period immediately preceding. His purpose, he tells us in his preface, "has been to write neither an indictment nor a vindication of Japan's expansionism, but to set forth as objectively as possible the main events and causes of the forward drive in Asia." This he does with great clarity and completeness. He is very observant and has an orderly mind, and marshals his facts well. Moreover, he exercises a care and discrimination that enables him to avoid those errors which, in most books about Japan, exasperate the reader who knows enough to detect them.

The scheme of *Japan Over Asia* is an examination of the relations and possible antagonisms between Japan and her neighbours—Russia, China, Siam, the Dutch East Indies, the Philippines, and, at longer range, the United States and the British Empire. Afterwards he examines the internal forces, often pulling several ways at once. And, as is natural and necessary at the present time, he discusses the growth of nationalism in China, of which he speaks as though it were the too tardily adopted essential of progress in a progressive world. There is also the possible view that by the time China has put on the whole armour of nationalism, Japan and the rest of the world may have cause to repent the destruction of a civilisation which grew more by culture than by the sword. He gives, with admirable brevity, a truer description of the Chinese Communist movement than we have come across in much longer efforts elsewhere; but he does not say quite enough about how near General Chiang Kai-shek himself was to Communism in the Canton days.

The endeavour to steer between an indictment and a vindication is always dangerous: it is apt to leave the reader with a too Olympian indifference to the clanging fights and flaming towns and sinking ships and praying hands. Mr. Chamberlin tells us that the Japanese feel that they have a special claim to North China. A few years ago they felt they had a special claim to Manchuria; since the book was written the same feeling has spread all over the Yangtse valley, and to-morrow it may cover Canton and Yunnan. And the justification always comes down to pressure of population. But *il faut vivre* was never regarded as a particularly moral excuse.

The few pages which are devoted to the Emperor-cult are excellent, and perhaps as much as the Occidental reader could be expected to swallow; but this cult is really a much more portentous thing than can be adequately dealt with so briefly. The best that can be hoped of it is that its growing mischief may cause a revolt in Japan itself. "Impossible!" many will say. But it was impossible in Russia forty years ago, and it is basically a device for keeping the people docile and uncritical. In the name of the sacred Emperor the ruling class does what it will. Mr. Chamberlin rather misses the point in the "Minobe affair," but so did very many Japanese. Dr. Minobe, a learned loyalist, was asked whether the rule that the Ministers of Defence and Chiefs of Staff might interview the Emperor and advise him at any time, just like the Premier, did not give them too much power. He replied that their advice to the Emperor was only that of the army or the navy, whereas the Premier's advice was that of the nation. Nothing was said at the time, but Minobe's works were searched for an incriminating phrase, which was found at last in a thirty-year-old textbook on the Constitution, describing the Throne as an "organ of the State." *More Japonico* the real offence was left unmentioned, and the army started a campaign against this blasphemy, every blackguard in the country being incited to denounce him. He was shorn of honours and emoluments, his books suppressed, and he was shot in the leg. The favourite political weapon in Japan is to convict your enemy of "disrespect." Loyalty is degenerating into terrorism.

A valuable chapter in Mr. Chamberlin's book is "The Advance to the South." This, in part, as he points out, is the navy's reply to the army. He refers to articles in the Japanese press suggesting that the natives of the Dutch East Indies would be much better off under Japan. Similar articles dwell on the desperate discontent of the natives of French Indo-China, Malaya, and even Burma and Ceylon.

Mr. Chamberlin does not excuse Japanese aggression, but he might have put more forcibly with advantage that the army which makes itself the custodian of imperial sacredness can only maintain its position and prestige by predacity, since no national economy could support it. A. MORGAN YOUNG

ELIZABETHAN PAPERS

Speeding Up Shakespeare. By W. J. LAWRENCE. *Argonaut Press.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

Shakespeare Biography. By FELIX E. SCHELLING. *Oxford University Press.* 7*s.*

"It would be a curious type of reader," say Dr. Lawrence's publishers, "for whom this book has nothing of interest." That is a Bull! It is precisely to the curious reader that Dr. Lawrence appeals. And a Bull, Curious Reader, has nought to do with Paddy or the Pope or a china shop. His origin is an inn in Clerkenwell and his birth-year 1605. The stage Irishman, on the other hand, originated not upon the stage but with the publication in 1690 of a chapbook entitled *Teagueland Jests, or Bog Witticisms;* a mouse of ridicule engendered by the Glorious Revolution of 1688. These are no trifles. Dr. Lawrence is no pedant but a collector and connoisseur. The smallest things are grist to the mill, grit to the oyster.

> Trifles light as air
> Are to the *scholar* confirmations strong
> As proofs of holy writ.

The professor and academic of to-day, one is told, employs his leisure hours on Miss Christie and Miss Sayers, on Caliban and Torquemada. And has not literary research suffered the contagion of detective fiction? Think what a Carter or Pollard will make of nicked type, cloth bindings or esparto grass; what a Dover Wilson will construct upon a semi-colon and a Leslie Hotson upon a scrap of parchment. Dr. Lawrence's cabinet of curios contains nutshells and candle-ends and green baize, headless dummies and stage gore, props and prompt-books and scenarios:

> Feathers and dust, to-day and yesterday.

Does not Donne's line, beloved of Jonson, conjure up theatrical history; the dust of controversy and old manuscript, plumes from the coiffure of the divine Siddons? In his companion volume to *Those Nutcracking Elizabethans*, papers reprinted and revised from *The Times Literary Supplement*, *The Criterion* and elsewhere, Dr. Lawrence writes now for fellow scholars, now for the common reader. Reprinted of necessity, since even a Thorn-Drury or Allardyce Nicoll could miss some significant discoveries made by Dr. Lawrence in his examination of Sir Henry Herbert's Office Book and the Malone Collection in the Bodleian. Even the mighty editors of Ben Jonson may glean a grain from his chapter on *The Elizabethan Plotter*. But if it is to scholars that such things as these are directed, scholars who will care to learn that Dekker in *Satiromastix* (IV, i, 173) is poking fun at the fine

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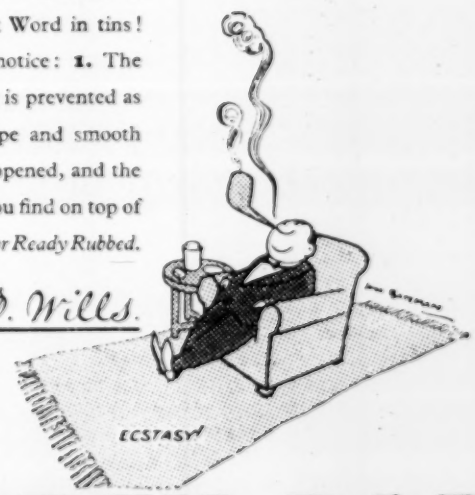

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close of *Bussy D'Ambois* and (possibly) at a risky piece of "business" with a taper, yet Dr. Lawrence's rehabilitation of that flat-nosed squinting slop-breeched petty pigmy, sweet Willie, *alias* Dick Tarleton, inventor of the Jig, progenitor in a sense of John Gay's Ballad Opera, Grimaldi's forerunner, cannot fail to delight grave and gay, judicious and groundling alike. The common reader or playgoer will be chiefly entertained with the story of the first grave-digger's twenty-three waistcoats, a piece of business dating from the end of the eighteenth century and as ill-advised as Mr. Guthrie's innovations with those gentlemen last year; he will ask himself whether "To be or not to be" had once a different context; he will trace the history of the stage dummy from realistic Elizabethan executions down to Mrs. Siddons's disaster with a wooden infant, Ellen Terry's appearance in Kean's revival of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, when her dummy Puck crashed in full flight, to the Harlequinade, and (most recent manifestation) the shop dummy in *A Bride for the Unicorn*. Where Dr. Lawrence adventures on to more general questions in *Some Reflections on Shakespeare's Dramaturgy* and his title essay, we find him very much less satisfactory, convincing and lucid, although the point he has to make about Shakespeare's use of the word "act" and its bearing upon act-structure is important and needs further pursuit. Every other chapter contains grains of pure salt.

Of a different order of Shakespeare criticism, the old order, are the papers, mainly Elizabethan, collected by the great American teacher, Dr. Felix Schelling. Here are general surveys and reflections of a sort which survives with us only on the lips of Grierson and "Q." Are there not some who, in these iconoclastic days, tilt a supercilious eyebrow at the name of Bradley? "Nobody marks them; they will still be talking." One of Dr. Schelling's happiest papers is a tribute of praise to "Variorum" Furness, Titan of the old order; another an account of the Library of the Furness Memorial and its treasures; folios, quartos, allusion books; the recorders of Booth's Hamlet, Sir Henry Irving's Shylock's cloak, Yorick's skull inscribed with the names of Macready and Kemble. Dr. Schelling is himself in the line of Horace Howard Furness, in whose heart a lifelong devotion to Shakespeare was inspired by the resonant reading and traditional gesture of the niece of Mrs. Siddons. Admirable of its kind in this volume (published some time since) is the essay *A Negative of Shakespeare*, reminding us of all those things which Shakespeare was not; neither theological, academic, satirical nor allegorical; neither rationalist nor rhetorician; one who did not kill his man or chew tobacco. But the most valuable paper of all is that in which Dr. Schelling attacks modern academic (particularly American) education and warns teacher and student of the dangers of that bugbear and chimera, indiscriminate research and the Ph.D. degree. His is a voice crying in a wilderness, an Abyssinia, where time and energy and money are spent and wasted to little purpose. It is not thus that such a scholar as Dr. Schelling himself, with his range and judgment, wisdom and understanding, ease and good manners, is nurtured. Post-graduate courses, theses and endowments can but *thrust* scholarship upon a man. A scholar such as Dr. Lawrence is born not made.

GEORGE RYLANDS

SOUTH AFRICAN POLITICS

The Imperial Factor in South Africa: A Study in Politics and Economics. By C. W. DE KIEWIET. *Cambridge University Press.* 15s.

Only last December the Prime Minister of Great Britain showed how the habit persists of attaching significance in South African history to the fortunes only of its white rulers. In a speech on "Empire Unity" Mr. Chamberlain announced as matter of fact that at the beginnings of Tariff Reform, about 1904, when Canada alone had most of seven millions and Australia three, the population of the Dominions was "about ten millions *in all*." The Natives of South Africa were then at least four millions. While Professor de Kiewiet's study is of only a few critical years, 1871–85, it is of much wider significance, throwing much needed light on the process by which these Natives, more than three times as numerous as the ruling minority, were deprived of living room in their own territories, and "pumped into every limb and artery of the South African social body": this is the cruel wrong of the modern "segregation policy" which is in effect an attempt to govern the country as if it were the homogeneous European community Mr. Chamberlain seems to imagine.

This book is an important aid to better understanding. After 1852 Great Britain had put the adventure of Emancipation behind it. According to a Colonial Office spokesman, Downing Street had for its reward "twenty-five years of peace and freedom from anxiety"; but the truth is that South Africa itself by the middle seventies had become a confusion of weak and jealous fragments trembling on the verge of a general war with the wronged and discontented Natives. The pivotal chapter on "Land and Landlessness" brings out the state of congestion to which these had been reduced, the denudation and soil erosion which even then were devastating the "Reserves," and the extent of the Natives' dependence on wage-earning. Professor de Kiewiet's central theme is Lord Carnarvon's much misrepresented scheme of Federation. This it is made clear was conceived in the hope that "the Imperial Factor" might yet be the means of "creating an order in which there was room and hope not merely for Dutch and English but also for the native majority." But Imperial good intentions were never supported with any decision. Native rights were presently made a condition of Transvaal independence, but impotent nagging failed to secure their civil and economic status, and in fact led straight to the catastrophe of 1899. Economic policy is aptly summed up as making it "almost a rule of conduct to pay only for disasters."

By a tragic fate the "native troubles," which came to a climax in the Zulu War of 1879, made Carnarvon's successors see the Natives only as a military menace in face of which Briton and Boer must at all costs stand together. A Colonial Office minute of 1885 concludes hopefully: ". . . Once we get Natives under the Cape Colonists alone, everything goes right. They understand Native management much better than we do." So little did "trusteeship" count that the annexation at last of St. Lucia Bay on the Zululand coast, and of Bechuanaland, was brought about not by a sense of British responsibility for Native interests but only for fear of the encroachment of European rivals.

As well as all the apparatus of scholarship Professor de Kiewiet brings to his task—with intimate local knowledge—such impartial sympathy for all parties concerned as must carry conviction.

W. M. MACMILLAN

BOURGEOISIE DETECTED

Proceed with Caution. By JOHN RHODE. *Collins.* 7s. 6d.
No Mourning in the Family. By R. PHILMORE. *Collins.* 7s. 6d.
The Silver Sickle Case. By LYNN BROCK. *Collins.* 7s. 6d.
The Missing Aunt. By G. D. H. and MARGARET COLE. *Collins.* 7s. 6d.
Murder of a Headmistress. By EDITH PICKERING. *Longmans.* 7s. 6d.
The Case of the Constant God. By RUFUS KING. *Methuen.* 7s. 6d.
The Dead Don't Care. By JONATHAN LATIMER. *Methuen.* 7s. 6d.
Uncharted Seas. By DENNIS WHEATLEY. *Hutchinson.* 8s. 6d.

Only the other day I was reading in the daily paper about the astonishing success in America of a *revue* composed and performed by a trades union of Ladies' Garment Workers. If only I could have seen it! Because then I might be humming, to help *my* review, the tune that all the errand boys of New York are whistling: "Sing Us a Song of Social Significance." For nothing less will satisfy readers of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, judging by their ferocity in the correspondence columns. Write your reviews with Radical relevance, or you will belong to that "snobbish, wealthy, ignorant, and small minority," the "parlour Bolsheviks." But personally I hope to have reached the solution of one of the greatest mysteries of the age—the reason why so much detective stuff written nowadays is second-rate. How can writers expect capitalist crimes, committed almost invariably in middle-class society, to interest the class-conscious workers?

Take Mr. John Rhode, for example, a man with original ideas. (Who would have thought of stewing a body out of all recognition in one of those tar-boilers one so often passes by the side of the road, as the villain does in *Proceed With Caution*?) Mr. Rhode employs in his detection Dr. Priestley, "an uncompromising scientist." But what is the value of a scientist who can only point out coincidences of time and place to his friends in Scotland Yard? Anyone with merely a classical education could do that. The plot of *Proceed With Caution* is simple. There are two

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crimes, a murder and a jewel robbery, either of which might well prove insoluble to Jimmy Waghorn and Superintendent Hanslet without Dr. Priestley's services as liaison officer. Unfortunately for Mr. Rhode's plot, the inter-connection of the crimes makes their author immediately obvious. Yet, in an otherwise well-constructed story, I should not regard this weakness as a great blemish; only how can I condone the complete absence of any member of the working-classes except a village drunkard?

Mr. Philmore at least introduces a Communist in *No Mourning in the Family*. That's good. But I don't care for the role he is called upon to play, that of subservient son to a domineering, profiteering, humbug of a father. (As for Swan, Mr. Philmore's detective, he is the living image of a parlour Bolshevik.) The family does not mourn for Samson Farrar, because they all hated him and one of them murdered him. The old man died, drinking a cup of coffee alone in a garden, of prussic acid poisoning. How on earth was he given the poison? By a devilish piece of ingenuity on the part of Mr. Philmore. Yet the author is hoist with his own petard, because the contrivance is so cunning that the criminal can only be identified by self-confession, helped out with a flimsy chain of reasoning from Swan. It is possible to be too clever in detective writing, by fabricating perfect murders, which detectives can guess but only the murderer can solve.

I found *The Silver Sickle Case* distinctly exciting, but deplorably class-conscious—of the middle classes. Not a single character in it could have joined the Left Book Club. The nature of the plot, however, is such that it would be ruined by description. All I can say is that it centres round The Silver Sickle, a fast road-house in the vicinity of what looks suspiciously like Bournemouth. Mr. Brock writes briskly and well, and makes one rack one's brains for a solution of all the strange doings at his road-house. (The customers used to play a game called Scatchcan in the dark, but not one of the many detectives explains *that* mystery.) But you are doomed to disappointment; the *dénouement* is feeble and unconvincing, a sad end to such an exhilarating book.

Surely, the Coles can be depended on to strike a blow for the social revolution. Yet the setting of *The Missing Aunt* is Grace-church Abbey with its Dower House, a world of dreary capitalism, of wills and marriage settlements and death duties. Two rich old ladies perish within a few hours of each other, and Superintendent Wilson is called in to decide which of their nephews and nieces must be responsible. The Coles at least do not hold with screening villainy, for from the earliest pages they indicate by their righteous animosity where the guilt lies. Virtue, in the character of a noble hiking hero from Magdalen College, Oxford, is deservedly rewarded with the heroine. Thus everyone gets his deserts, except the poor reader who wants to be a little misled.

The headmistress knifed by Miss Pickering was in charge of an academy for young ladies, not, alas, one of our public elementary schools. That is enough to account for the *petit bourgeois* limitations of *Murder of a Headmistress*; for the Senior Common Room at Denistone Hall High School bristles with unpleasantly life-like specimens of the young women who educate *rentiers'* daughters. Miss Pickering handles the staff with feminine zest, but, when it comes to detection, her inexperience betrays her. The clue by which two of the younger and more attractive mistresses eventually solve the crime hits the reader in the eye like a barge pole as soon as it appears.

American writers are no better than English in their political outlook, only they kowtow to plutocracy instead of public schools; their crimes are mostly solved in the lap of luxury under the stimulus of neat alcohol. Deplorable! Mr. Rufus King, unless I mistake, was the author of *Murder By Latitude*, one of the most exciting detective stories ever written. *The Case of the Constant God* has its exciting moment, when the killer is at large on a yacht in a fog outside the five-mile limit; but the rest of the narrative is tame by comparison. "The Constant God" is just the name of a new-fangled religion, the founder of which, an ex-blackmailer, is bumped off in a Long Island mansion under inexplicable circumstances. Mr. King's final explanation of those circumstances is a stunning surprise, but a wicked imposition on our credulity. "That, Lieutenant, is a little too dumb to believe," as one character appropriately remarks.

I have hitherto respected William Crane as the most hard-boiled detective in fiction, but there are signs of weakening in *The Dead Don't Care*. He drinks as much whisky as ever, but is getting soft about women; there is a horrid touch of chivalry about the way in which he rescues a kidnapped girl at the risk of his life. Mr. Latimer's story is still tough enough in parts, but no one is either tortured or violated; and without such distractions the plot is transparent. For anyone who wants flagellation and rape, apart from detection, there is *Uncharted Seas*, Dennis Wheatley's latest adventure phantasy. A derelict steamer in the Southern Atlantic is caught in a super-Sargasso sea and finds two islands, one inhabited by whites, the other by negroes. The negroes hop across the weed to the white island on gas-balloons to carry off white women, when their supply is running short. You can guess the sort of thing that happens; or, if you can't, you will have to read the book.

RALPH PARTRIDGE

IRISH POETS

The Herne's Egg. A Stage Play. By W. B. YEATS. *Macmillan.* 5s.

The Silver Branch. A Collection of the Best Old Irish Lyrics. Variously translated. Chosen by SEÁN O'FAOLÁIN. *Cape.* 5s.

Mr. Yeats's almost successful attempt to escape completely from the Celtic Twilight won the admiration of all who like a good fight. Applause greeted his resolution to "Hurl helmets, crowns, and swords into the pit." But mists of his own past have defeated Mr. Yeats at last. His new extravaganza begins with a couple of Celtic kings fighting an endless magic battle with bronze weapons. When we meet them again they are blind drunk and fighting with less heroic implements to the accompaniment of drum and concertina:

> To arms, to arms! Connaught to arms!
> Insulted and betrayed, betrayed and insulted.
> Who has insulted me? Tara has insulted.
> To arms, to arms! Connaught to arms!
> To arms—but if you have not got any
> Take a table-leg or a candlestick,
> A boot or a stool or any odd thing.
> Who has betrayed me? Tara has betrayed!
> To arms, to arms! Connaught to arms!

Supported by the bibulous Pat, Mike, James and "the boys," King Congal decides that Attracta, the priestess, must be raped by seven men in succession. Attracta, we may explain, had been leading an immoral life with a bird, to wit, a heron. The play ends on a pantomimic note on a mountain at moonrise: "the moon of comic tradition, a round smiling face." Accompanied by one of Mr. Yeats's Fools, Congal enters. As an immolation to the Great Herne, he permits himself to be killed with a kitchen spit by the Fool. Meanwhile, Attracta and Corney, her servant, come on the scene, the latter bringing his pet donkey.

Attracta, who knows all about the ways of transmigration, attempts to thwart the Great Herne by offering herself to Corney. But the conspirators are anticipated by the donkey, who has retired off-stage in pursuit of a female of his species. The spirit of King Congal is doomed to re-appear on earth in a humiliating shape. As the dejected Corney remarks:

> All that trouble and nothing to show for it,
> Nothing but just another donkey.

Mr. Yeats has attempted to capture the madcap spirit of the old mock-heroic tales of Gaelic tradition. But exuberance of spirits requires exuberance of language as in those tales: Rabelaisian mysticism without the necessary torrent of vocabulary is surely an unnatural, if not monstrous, product. Synge might have succeeded, but it seems to me that Mr. Yeats succeeds merely in parodying himself rather unpleasantly. His last play rewarded us with a magnificent lyrical ballad. Here the verse remains thin and sourish—small beer, in fact.

In contrast comes Mr. O'Faoláin's little anthology of translations from early Irish poetry. We may quote from a delightful poem on mystical inebriety, "The Heavenly Banquet," which some medieval humorist has ascribed to Saint Bridget:

> I would like to have the men of Heaven
> in my own house;
> with vats of good cheer
> laid out for them.
>
> I would like a great lake of beer
> For the King of Kings.
> I would like to be watching Heaven's family
> drinking it through all eternity.

Many of the early nature poems will be familiar to those acquainted with Kuno Meyer's *Ancient Irish Poetry*, and other compilations. But Mr. O'Faoláin has brought together some fine

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IVOR NOVELLO, DOROTHY DICKSON, MARIE LOHR in
CREST OF THE WAVE

DUCHESS, Catherine St., W.C.2. TEM. 8243.
Evgs., 8.30. Mats., Wed. & Sat., 2.30.
JEAN FORBES-ROBERTSON in J. B. Priestley's
TIME AND THE CONWAYS

DUKE OF YORK'S. Temple Bar 5122. Evgs., 8.30.
Matinees, WED. & SAT., 2.30.
MARGARET RAWLINGS in
BLACK LIMELIGHT

GARRICK. Tem. 4601. 8.30. Mats., Th., Sat. 2.30.
THE DANIEL MAYER COMPANY Present
CYRIL CAMPION'S
THIS MONEY BUSINESS

GLOBE. Ger. 1592. Evenings, 8.30 sharp.
Mat., WEDS. and SATS., 2.30 sharp.
ROBERT'S WIFE
By ST. JOHN ERVINE.

HIPPODROME. Ger. 3272. EVGS., 8.15.
Mats., THURS. and SATS., at 2.30.
BOBBY HOWES and CICELY COURTNEIDGE
in **"HIDE AND SEEK"**

NOTICE TO CLASSIFIED ADVERTISERS

Commencing with next week's issue, February 5th, classified advertisements will be charged on a word basis instead of per line as hitherto. This arrangement will, we believe, be more convenient to advertisers in calculating the cost of their advertisements.

As will be seen, the new method of charging gives substantial discounts to those advertisers booking a series of advertisements.

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★ ONE WORD: Place names, *e.g.*, Birmingham. Ashton-under-Lyne. Golders Green.
'Phone numbers, *e.g.*, HOL. 3216. 'Phone 2414
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The Advertisement Manager
THE NEW STATESMAN & NATION
10 Gt. Turnstile, W.C.1
HOL. 3216.

THEATRES—continued

HIS MAJESTY'S. (Whi. 6606.) EVGS., 8.15.
BALALAIKA A Musical Play.
Mats., WEDNESDAY & SATURDAY, 2.30.

LYRIC. Gerrard 3686.
Evgs., 8.30 sharp. Mats., Wed., Thurs., 2.30.
VICTORIA REGINA
by LAURENCE HOUSMAN.

PLAYHOUSE. Over 735 Perfs. Whi. 7774.
Evgs., 8.30 (ex. Mon.). WED., THURS., SAT., 2.30.
NANCY PRICE in
WHITEOAKS
LONDON'S LONGEST RUN.

QUEEN'S. Gerrard 4517.
JOHN GIELGUD'S SEASON.
Evgs., 8.30 sharp. Mats., Wed. & Sat. next, 2.30.
THREE SISTERS

ROYALTY. (Ger. 7331.) Evenings at 8.30.
Matinees, THURS. & SAT., 2.30.
I HAVE BEEN HERE BEFORE
by J. B. PRIESTLEY.

ST. JAMES'S. Whi. 3903.
Evenings, 8.40. Matinees, Thurs. & Sat., 2.30.
THE INNOCENT PARTY
by H. M. Harwood & Laurence Kirk.

ST. MARTIN'S. (Tem. 1443). Evgs. 8.30, Tu. F. 2.30.
FLORA ROBSON in
AUTUMN
A BASIL DEAN PRODUCTION.

SAVOY. Evgs., 8.30. Mon., Sat., 2.30. Tem. 8888.
HENRY EDWARDS in
BULLDOG DRUMMOND HITS OUT
by "SAPPER" & Gerard Fairlie.

SHAFTESBURY. Gerrard 6666.
Evenings, 8.30. Matinees, Wed., Sat., 2.30.
EDMUND GWENN in
THANK YOU, Mr. PEPYS

STRAND. (Tem. 2660.) 8.30. Thur., Sat., 2.30.
ROOM SERVICE
by John Murray & Allen Boretz.
"The Funniest Play of the Year"—*Daily Mail.*

VICTORIA PALACE. (Vic. 1317.) Nightly, 6.20 & 9.
LUPINO LANE
TEDDY ST. DENIS & GEORGE GRAVES
ME AND MY GIRL
A NEW MUSICAL COMEDY.

WESTMINSTER, S.W.1. Near Victoria Station.
Evgs., 8.30. Wed., Sat., 2.30. (1 month only.)
Ben Jonson's Comedy, **VOLPONE.**
Seats bookable, 8/6, 4/6 and 2/6. Vic. 0283.

WHITEHALL. Smoking. (Whi. 6692.)
Evgs., 8.30 sharp. Mats., Wed. & Sat., 2.30.
I KILLED THE COUNT
by Alec Coppel.

WYNDHAM'S. Tem. 3028.
EVGS., 8.30. Mats., Wed. and Sats., at 2.30.
"GEORGE and MARGARET"
COMEDY by GERALD SAVORY.

FILMS

ACADEMY, Oxford St. Ger. 2981.
The film for which a Special Prize was created.
"LA GRANDE ILLUSION" (A).
with Erich V. Stroheim, Jean Gabin, Dita Parlo & Pierre Fresney.

EVERYMAN (Opp. Hampstead Tube Stn.) Ham. 2285
MONDAY, JAN. 31st, for SEVEN DAYS
CONRAD VEIDT in
RASPUTIN (A)
Also THE MARCH OF TIME, No. 6. (U)

REPERTORY THEATRES

THE PLAYHOUSE, LIVERPOOL.
Evgs., 7.45. Mats., Sat., 2.30.
The Way of the Wind. By Murray McClymont.

HULL. Little
Evgs., 8. Mat., Sat., 5 p.m.
Gertie Maude. By John Van Druten.

MANCHESTER REPERTORY THEATRE
Evenings at 7.30. Mats., Sat., 2.30.
Queen for a Year. By Armitage Owen.

RESTAURANTS

A H well, if you've not been to RULES you have missed a lot in life. . . . Maiden Lane (Covent Garden). Lunch, Dinner, or late Supper (licensed till midnight). Est. 1780.

GIVE your Sherry Party at The Book WINE RESTAURANT, facing British Museum, where you can also read "THE NEW STATESMAN" and take out a subscription. Mus. 6428.

pieces which will be new to the general reader, such as the poem on the scattering of the bardic schools:

> As a plank goes out of the side of a cask
> the wall of learning has broken.

Mr. O'Faoláin contributes some prose versions of his own. But he admits that his acquaintance with medieval Irish is slight and he appears merely to have "sub-edited" the translations of scholars. His main object has been to show the early poetic background to which modern Irish poets owe so much and this tribute from a realistic novelist is a pleasing one.

AUSTIN CLARKE

SHAKESPEARE'S LAST PLAYS

Shakespeare's Last Plays. By E. M. W. TILLYARD. *Chatto and Windus.* 3s. 6d.

Shakespeare Survey. By WILLIAM EMPSON and GEORGE GARRETT. *Brendin.* 1s.

The three last plays of Shakespeare—*Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale*, *The Tempest*—present a problem beside which *Hamlet* is easy. It is not even certain that they *are* the last three; assume, though, that they are. Shakespeare had retired, Shakespeare was disgusted, played-out, cynical, romantic, careless, contemplative—each adjective according to the critic. To Lytton Strachey—himself incapable, as he once confessed, of "lifting a pin before breakfast"—Shakespeare's last phase appeared a godlike weariness from which only the possibilities of a lyric or a new rhythm could stir the poet.

Mr. Tillyard does not find a bored Shakespeare; on the other hand, I am not quite sure what he does find. His argument, briefly, is this. The period of Shakespeare's tragedies was succeeded by a state of mind in which tragedy (destruction) was enlarged to what he calls "the tragic pattern" (destruction followed by regeneration). In tragedy itself this regeneration had already been implicit: a nobler Othello, a redeemed Lear rising at the moment of calamity from their own ruin. What is stressed in the post-tragic plays, the "romances" as they have been called, is this theme of rebirth, so that the protagonist lives on and calamity is succeeded, as in Aeschylean trilogy, by reconciliation. The "tragedy" of *Cymbeline* is resolved—clumsily, it is true—in the last act; *The Winter's Tale* passes midway from a tragic and almost legendary past to present happiness; when *The Tempest* opens, Prospero's tragedy (fall and banishment) has already occurred and is only introduced, as at the beginning of an Ibsen play, by anecdote. In each of the three plays, it will be noticed, the switch over from tragedy to rebirth has been put back one stage, until finally it precedes the raising of the curtain.

That is Mr. Tillyard's first idea. His second, which he calls "Planes of Reality," is that Shakespeare's last plays reveal many more levels of experience than the earlier ones. Two levels are immediately obvious, the tragic and the idyllic, which in conjunction give these plays their peculiar intensity. Mr. Tillyard finds others; these could, however, be paralleled elsewhere in Shakespeare.

In an epilogue he brings together his two themes, "the tragic pattern," and "planes of reality," and describes Shakespeare's final period as an attempt to unite human tragedy with a contemplation of planes of existence akin to the religious. I have set out the skeleton of his argument as clearly as I can. It seems to me halfway true (the "tragic pattern" almost holds), but valuable chiefly so far as it leads him to appreciation of Shakespeare's verse.

All such books as Mr. Tillyard's seem to be written out of some preconception about Shakespeare the man. Mr. Tillyard has thought, perhaps, of Beethoven's late quartets (they are mentioned somewhere in his pages, I think), of new wine bursting old bottles, of a great poet's last phase, and so on. "It may be that in his last plays Shakespeare was trying to express more than ever before." What really annoyed him about Strachey's picture of tired disillusion was, not so much that Strachey was up to a point demonstrably wrong, as that his view introduced anticlimax. Others have delighted in the inspired "resignation" of *The Tempest*, one critic even going so far as to add that it would be "intolerable" to believe this play could be any other than Shakespeare's last. Sentimental writers, in the same way, pass over the "unpleasant" plays, as though either Shakespeare had never written them or they represent a phase to be discouraged. Why must critics of Shakespeare for ever try to measure themselves up against him *as a man*? (Middleton Murry, indeed, made heroic efforts on tiptoe.) Tolstoy wrote *Resurrection* after *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina*; no one finds that "intolerable": why should not Shakespeare, too, descend after *Lear*? Mr. Tillyard's hints at a late semi-religious contemplation of life, his description of *The Winter's Tale* as a Divine Comedy with Heaven, Hell and Purgatory, seem sentimentally exaggerated. *The Winter's Tale* is, indeed, a masterpiece which one is delighted to find brought again into daylight. Mr. Tillyard has intelligent and subtle things to say. But his final description of the play is remote from any impression it makes by performance. It is episodic—that surely is plain? It works on us, in moods, like blocks of music: Leontes' jealousy, which blows up like an operatic tempest; Hermione's trial and vindication; the abandoning of Perdita, followed by comic discovery; the country scenes; the unveiling of the statue (almost symbolist in its effect). These scenes, like the movements of a symphony, have each its mood, its pace, its enchantment, its contrast to the others; they are dramatic in the sense, say, that Berlioz's Fantastic Symphony is dramatic. And *The Winter's Tale* would be a superb play if it were not rent halfway by a gap of sixteen years and bridged with one speech of twenty or so indifferent lines. Musically speaking, one movement is missing. *Then* we realise that the time element, the dramatic sequence, the cause and effect of which Mr. Tillyard makes so much, are really irrelevant to this play of pure moods. Leontes, having been terrible in jealousy, is now abject and mild in pity; and so far as audience or reader is concerned it is not the same character, but two themes, arbitrarily given one name. The statue is not even a surprise survival of the Hermione of Act I, because nothing connects one with the other; nor, dramatically, are we ever made to feel that Perdita is the daughter of Leontes and Hermione. But though I think Mr. Tillyard mistaken in some of the significances he attaches to *The Winter's Tale*, his enthusiasm is right, and to anyone who knows Shakespeare at all well this is the play of *echt* Shakespearean moments. Listen to it passively, taking the situations as programme to the verse, and Leontes' jealousy speeches of Act I surpass Othello's, the comedy of Clown and Shepherd at the end of Act III is the purest in Shakespeare, and the idyll of Perdita and Florizel contains more of love and the countryside than the whole of *As You Like It*. Though *The Tempest* is a more successful play, its texture seems by comparison artificial and coarse.

Prospero is a bore (to that extent Strachey was justified) and of all Shakespearean protagonists the one who attracts no sympathy. All we dislike in Brutus, in Portia, in the early Lear is here rolled into one character. Mr. George Garrett contributes to *Shakespeare Survey* an essay on "That Four-Flusher Prospero" which vigorously expresses our dislike. As a jaunty bit of slanging I recommend his essay to all those who come away from *The Tempest* half-drugged and half-infuriated by the conjurer's tricks; Mr. Dante, with his "magical superba" at the Winter Garden, arouses much the same feelings. The island, of course, is the hero of the play. But the mood in which Shakespeare projected Prospero was surely not *boredom*; nor, despite Mr. Tillyard, semi-religious contemplation. An uneasy self-satisfaction seems at times nearer the mark.

G. W. STONIER

COLLECTIVISM

The Growth of Collective Economy. By F. E. LAWLEY. 2 volumes. *King.* 35s.

Mr. Lawley's two massive volumes serve, by their very bulk, to indicate the immense scope and variety of State control and regulation of economic processes and conditions in the period since the war. For, despite his thousand pages, a good deal of his book is hardly more than a catalogue of occurrences which he lacks space even to summarise at any length. With immense industry he has collected instances of nationalisation, State control, State intervention in order to bring about economic reorganisation, adumbrations of international economic organisation—in short, of every type of development that can be regarded as contributing to the growth of a planned or collective economy under public control. This catalogue occupies a large part of his first volume; and with it is a brief account of war-time forms and methods of State control in the leading countries, and also a discussion of the problems and systems of compensation to private owners, and of the alternative ways of administering publicly controlled services.

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DANCES

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CHARGES FOR SMALL ADVERTISEMENTS

DETAILS of rates for single or a series of insertions will be found on page 179 of this issue.

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In this volume Mr. Lawley ranges over the entire world—with the one important exception of the Soviet Union, which is deliberately excluded. The reader finds himself reading on one page about the post-war British experience, on the next about Fascist measures in Germany or Italy, on the next about the "New Deal" in the United States, and then a page later about the laws projected by the latest dictatorship in Paraguay. His method has two disadvantages—first, that the multiplication of examples does not allow any one thing to be fully enough described, and secondly that it results in a too formal treatment—so that an instance of public control is presented out of its social and political context, and appears as if it were much the same whether it occurred in Great Britain or Italy or Japan. Indeed, the principal value of Mr. Lawley's enormous chapter listing the post-war developments is that it serves as a sort of index to guide the inquirer on his quest for more adequate information.

In the second volume Mr. Lawley proceeds to consider "the growth of international collective economy," with special reference to the work of the League and the I.L.O.—with which he was for a number of years officially connected. He also devotes a short chapter to movements for inter-State economic co-operation apart from the League—such as the co-operation between the Scandinavian countries, and the Pan-American movement. But this section is much too short in comparison with the detailed discussion of League activities; and he also devotes too little space to international co-operation in banking and finance—though he does give a brief section to the Bank for International Settlements. In general, he has shown remarkable industry, and has produced a book which will be of value as a guide to specialists; but he has shown all too little power of selection or balance, or of evaluating the mass of collected data so as to enable his readers to see the wood as well as the trees. G. D. H. COLE

SHORTER NOTICES

200,000 Feet on Foula. By MICHAEL POWELL. *Faber.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Mr. Powell has a grand story to tell us. A film-director, he was fired by the notion of a Movie about the evacuation of St. Kilda. Inhabitants were to be taken back to the deserted island, and their departure recreated: unluckily the owner of St. Kilda did not take to the idea—the birds for whom he had bought it would be disturbed—and Mr. Powell was left with 24 hours in which to find another island. He found Foula, twenty miles west of the Shetland Mainland. He transported for the island three actresses, seven actors, three cameramen, and about ten of those other mystery-men who figure on the "credit Titles" of a film, he hired a steamer to fetch and carry, he had huts built for habitation, he installed a wireless, he secured the help and the sympathy of the inhabitants, and he kept the company going through every misadventure. The sun rarely shone, the wind blew unceasingly: the actors had first to walk for hours over bogs and crags, and then to be drenched by waves or to cling to precipices; one actor broke his collar-bone, another had to be sent to a surgeon. An eighty-year-old actress was rushed to Foula by air, and then had to wait for weeks before a shot could be taken of her. The roof of the local church had to be raised. The sea was never calm for the boat-shots, skuas swooped down and struck the actors' heads, and the London office kept up a bombardment of exasperating orders. Finally, a gale cut off all communications, the huts became uninhabitable, cigarettes ran out and food became short. Worst of all, from Mr. Powell's point of view, he was secretly in love with one of the actresses and they quarrelled. Yet the film was completed, and every shot that he planned was made, though without one day to spare. Yes indeed—Mr. Powell has a great story to tell us. Unluckily he has not told it well. Those who saw the resulting film, *The Edge of the World* will know if he is neater with a camera than with a pen. Only one of the characters emerges at all clearly—Mr. Alasdair Holbourn, part-owner of the island. The members of the film-unit receive generous praise, which no doubt they deserved, but we get no clear picture of any of them; nor is the normal life of the islanders made clear enough; and even of Mr. Powell's own character one has only the most shadowy notion. Indeed we should have thought it impossible to write so many words about a very curious occasion and give so little information about it. On the other hand, Mr. Powell is very fond of his joke; there is a joke on almost every page, and we have rarely come across jokes we thought less funny. In fact this is a peculiarly exasperating book. It could have been so good, it is so elusive, and yet one goes on reading it, because the material is so fascinating. Mr. Powell, one would guess from the book, is by nature more intelligent than most people. He is able to write directly and well. But he is a victim of the preposterous world in which films are made.

The Gold Coast Yesterday and To-day. By PAUL REDMAYNE. *Chatto and Windus.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

This is a surprisingly delightful book. Mr. Redmayne gives succinctly the history of the Coast, and an account of its present economic, social and administrative condition. The past is hideously bloody: Portuguese, Dutch and English fight for the control of the Slave Trade, the natives are as cruel as the Europeans, and even when the Slave Trade has been abolished, there are continual wars with the Ashanti. To-day the Gold Coast is one of the best-managed colonies: all the land belongs to the natives, and on their small holdings they grow food for their needs, and cocoa to exchange for European goods. But the chief interest of this book is in the illustrations round which it has been built. Some of the captions may distress the fastidious, but Mr. Redmayne is a brilliant photographer, who has found in the Gold Coast a stunning subject. The castles he shows are a revelation, that makes us long to visit the Colony. One of them, Elmina, was built in the fifteenth century by the Portuguese with stones cut in Portugal and transported by sea, as modern steel bridges are made in England and transported to the wilds. Christiansborg was built in the seventeenth century by the Danes; Discone, Anamabu and Cape Coast Castle in the same century by the English. Mr. Redmayne is equally successful in photographing the human architecture of bone and muscle that makes many of the natives such splendid specimens; and he includes snapshots of those incongruities which amuse—and appal—the eye of the curious visitor to Africa; a window made of a motor-wheel, a fence made of petrol-cans, a Victorian bedroom jug used as a drinking vessel. There is even a photograph of the students at the local African University acting in *Charley's Aunt*. A view of Kumasi, the capital, is a depressing comment upon the architectural degeneration that has accompanied moral and economic progress. This city has been built in this century, and looks utterly and squalidly unplanned. But the beauty of most of Mr. Redmayne's photographs suggests that the Gold Coast would provide a subject for a film. The first Europeans arriving in the early fifteenth century, the brutal raids of Sir John Hawkins in Elizabethan times, the Anglo-Dutch wars and the building of the castles in the seventeenth century, the growth and the end of the Slave Trade, the gold-rush in the nineteenth century, and the modern development of the cocoa-trade, which has given Cadbury's chocolate to every English child and independence to the Gold Coast Native—a superb film-subject, of which presumably the English producers will allow Hollywood to get the benefit.

The Life of Charles Lord Metcalfe. By EDWARD THOMPSON. *Faber and Faber.* 21*s.*

Mr. Thompson has written the first authoritative biography of Lord Metcalfe since Kaye's was published in two volumes more than eighty years ago. It is a valuable social document and one that can be recommended to the comparative anthropologist as a study of the moral degradation of a white man when he comes up against a warm climate and a subject population. The early part of the book deals with Metcalfe's short career at Eton, where he was a brilliant and diligent scholar. Before he was sixteen, however, he went to India and, under the patronage of Lord Wellesley, the then Governor-General, entered on a dazzling career. Within ten years he was Resident at Delhi, where he wielded absolute authority over a large and important area. After other posts, including that of Resident at Hyderabad, he became a Member of Council, and owing to Lord William Bentinck's prolonged absence from Calcutta, virtual ruler of British India. His Indian contemporaries judged him to be a great man, a skilful negotiator and a wise ruler, and had he died in the East such would no doubt have been the verdict of posterity. He returned to England, however, in 1837, and then, in competition with keener brains and cleaner hands, proved himself a dismal failure. His ambitions led him towards Parliament, but in spite of his reputation and in spite of the immense amount of gerrymandering that he set on foot even that corrupt age was unwilling to sponsor him. In 1839 he was appointed Governor of Jamaica and in 1843 Governor-General of Canada. But the West was not the East and in both positions he was unsuccessful. He died in 1846. His type is to be found to-day in Bath, Cheltenham, Tunbridge Wells and the lesser South Kensington hotels by the thousand. Such men return from the East with grossly enhanced reputations and undue opinions of themselves, due mainly to Oriental flattery. When they are thrown into the company of their equals and superiors instead of that of a rigidly selective group of fellow whites the effects of long years of intoxicating power over abject natives are only too noticeable.

Mr. Thompson is to be congratulated on his achievement. Only one with his profound knowledge of India would have been able to have assimilated the immense number of documents and State papers which a study like this has necessitated. Although it is apparent that he is more than a little taken in by the legends that surround the Anglo-Indians of the heroic age, he manages to remain judiciously impartial throughout.

Endless Prelude. By VAUGHAN WILKINS. *Routledge.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

The author describes this book as "a pilfering and a plundering and a buccaneering expedition among the treasure ships of history." His collection, formed from contemporary diaries and letters, starts with the early days of Queen Victoria (whom he erroneously thinks had a pale, podgy face as a girl) and runs back to an expedition to Ireland paid by Noah's granddaughter in what might be called the dateless ages. For those who like potted history heavily spiced with headlines appropriate in a penny paper but somewhat peculiar in the middle of mediaeval chronicles, this book will be pleasant reading. As a bedside book it will amuse, and may even soothe, a more sophisticated public.

Company Meeting

F. W. WOOLWORTH & CO.

MR. W. L. STEPHENSON'S ADDRESS

THE twenty-ninth annual general meeting of F. W. Woolworth and Co., Ltd., was held on January 21st, in London.

Mr. W. L. Stephenson (the chairman), in the course of his speech, said: A moderate proportion of the increase in the Company's turnover can be ascribed to new business, since there was a certain amount of expansion during the year. Thirty-four new branches were opened, four old stores were completely replaced by new and improved buildings on new sites, and 40 of the old stores underwent alterations to provide extension of selling space. The year closed with 711 stores in operation. The major part of the increase in turnover arose out of the improvement in the general trade conditions in the country, and it is particularly pleasing to note that the industrial centres showed the most marked recovery.

The profit shown is a new high record for the Company, amounting to £6,490,013 after charging all expenses and depreciation, but before tax deduction. This is an increase over the previous year of £657,571. Additional stocks, properties, and fixtures have been added during the year amounting to £1,350,862, and the current write-off on properties and fixtures is £291,188. It is interesting to note that during the past six years the balance-sheet value of freehold and leasehold properties has risen from £6,687,864 to £9,524,097, and during the same period there has been written off against profits the sum of £889,875, which means that the Company has actually spent £3,726,008, which is more than 60 per cent. of the value of freehold and leasehold properties at the time of flotation. In the same period the amount written off fixtures amounts to £738,116. In addition, we have a specific reserve for buildings on freehold land which, after these accounts are accepted, stands at £450,000.

The stock of merchandise on hand at £3,320,759 is relatively approximate to that of 1936. The cash position remains satisfactory, the cash at bank and in hand amounting to £504,580 more than in the previous year. Against this we have an increase in liabilities under the heading "Sundry Creditors" amounting to £519,776, the bulk of which is made up of increased provision for taxation due for payments.

To sum up the figures, the Company in the year 1937, after deduction of tax, made an increased net profit amounting to £216,633.

WELFARE OF EMPLOYEES.

I feel assured that you will be pleased to know that the condition of employment of the Company's staff receives the consideration and attention which it deserves. The Company limits the working time of assistants to 48 hours a week, with the exception of seasonal trade, when overtime must be paid for anything beyond the limit of 48 hours. We are in favour of further improvements, especially in regard to earlier closing hours on Saturday evening, and would welcome legislation which would bring about a common earlier closing hour.

You, as shareholders, will be glad to learn that in this year under a scheme of annual increment in wages an additional sum of between £300,000 and £400,000 was distributed to staff working in the stores. This is a procedure that continues from year to year, and whilst looking at those figures it is noticeable that the cash Christmas presents to the female staff approached £60,000 for the 1937 Christmas.

A somewhat complicated arrangement for holidays was scrapped last year, and a new scheme was put into operation whereby any employee with six months' service received one week's holiday with full pay, and those with twelve months' continuous service with the Company received two weeks' holiday with full pay. This simplified the matter of holidays and gave everyone working in the stores an opportunity to have a well-earned change. The general health and spirit was such as to fully justify the extra cost of this arrangement.

I am happy to say that, although we did a very much greater volume of business in the year, the sum total of our imported goods was actually less than that of 1936. Adding the balance brought forward—namely, £3,507,977—to the profit of £6,490,013, we have a total of £9,997,991. The provision for taxation to date at £1,697,066 exceeds that of the previous year by £440,938.

This increase is in some part due to the larger profits shown in the year of assessment, to the increase of 3*d.* in the standard rate of income tax, and lastly, but chiefly, to the incidence of the National Defence Contribution.

The available balance is £7,232,175, and the directors recommend that £100,000 be transferred to freehold building reserve and that the staff benevolent fund shall receive £100,000. The final dividend recommended is to pay 1*s.* 9*d.* per share, less income tax, on the ordinary shares, plus a cash bonus of 6*d.* per share, less income tax, which together with the interim of 9*d.* per share gives 3*s.* per ordinary share, less tax. These recommendations, if accepted, will require £2,731,250, leaving a balance to carry forward of £4,500,925, which is an increase of £992,947.

The report and accounts were unanimously adopted.

Company Meeting

NATIONAL PROVINCIAL BANK LIMITED

MR. COLIN FREDERICK CAMPBELL'S ADDRESS

THE Annual General Meeting of the shareholders of the National Provincial Bank Limited was held on Thursday, January 27th, at the head office, 15 Bishopsgate, London, E.C.

Mr. Colin F. Campbell (the Chairman) said (in part):

Current, Deposit and other Accounts stand at £320,246,414 17*s.* 7*d.* Cash on hand and Balances at the Bank of England amount to £32,448,577 1*s.* 5*d.*, being 10.1 per cent. of the Deposits. Bills Discounted and Money at Call and Short Notice show a decline of approximately £16¾ million, which is due to the larger demand for Advances. Advances now stand at £140,445,454 6*s.* 11*d.* Investments other than those in other Banks stand at nearly £86 million and are approximately £2¾ million lower than at the end of last year; but they still represent over 26.8 per cent. of the Deposits.

We are glad to report a net profit of £1,874,959 18*s.* 6*d.*, being an increase of £104,786 15*s.* 6*d.* over the previous year. The dividend continues at 15 per cent., and after allocating £100,000 to Bank Premises Account and £250,000 to Pension Fund against £200,000 a year ago, and making a Transfer of £500,000 to Reserve Fund, there remains to be carried forward the sum of £573,714 11*s.* 8*d.*

The past year has not been free from events which have given rise to anxiety of one kind or another in the minds of those who take a thoughtful interest in world affairs; but in retrospect and in comparison with preceding years there can be no doubt that on balance substantial progress in economic recovery has been achieved in this country.

In support of this statement the Chairman then analysed the position of each major industry separately and went on to say: In spite of increased calls on the Exchequer, the Budget of Ordinary Expenditure is well balanced. In some quarters concern has been shown regarding the increase in 1937, compared with 1936, of £86 million in the adverse balance of our foreign trade account, and comparisons have been drawn with the position in 1931. It should be borne in mind, however, that seven years ago the widening deficit on Foreign Trade account was due in appreciable measure to a decline in exports: during the last year our exports have steadily advanced. The Balance of Trade is only one ingredient—though the most important—in our net Balance of Payments abroad. Such information as we have readily available supports the idea that net invisible exports will go a considerable way to counrerbalance the increased deficit on trade account.

After explaining that the reduced primary price levels now prevailing would in due course exercise a moderating effect on retail prices and production costs, the Chairman dealt with Exports of Short Term Capital and Long Term Investment, and continued: As an increase in our material welfare drawn from abroad is essentially a matter of the exchange of goods, I do not think it is possible to over-emphasise the desirability of pressing ahead with any measure designed to assist our export trades. In no other single direction, having particularly in mind that our great export and ancillary industries are among the worst affected by unemployment, can we expect such an abundant return for effort. It is true that some sections of industry are at present working at high pressure, but the importance of maintaining and increasing our export trade is so great that the need of markets overseas cannot be ignored.

When we look at the past year's history of the principal countries abroad we remark a further gratifying increase in the prosperity of members of the Sterling Group. Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa have benefited by the enhanced prices of their main products and find increasing ease in meeting the service of their external dues. India and the majority of the South American States have also participated in prosperity due to better markets for their produce.

With their improved prosperity, the Empire countries evince a desire to add to their populations. Wisely ordered schemes of emigration from this country will benefit the Dominions and the great Dependencies.

In a few directions we have to recognise that conditions have worsened. The outbreak of a major war in China has gravely embarrassed trade. The Civil War in Spain continues to exercise a harmful influence on the commerce of nations.

There has recently been a serious slowing down of industry and trade in the United States, but the spirit of courage and enterprise which has already done so much in the last few years to lighten the burden of internal commercial indebtedness and stimulate recovery, will surely soon be successful in enabling a resumption of progress.

There is no doubt that the past year has seen a marked improvement in economic conditions in many countries, and this improvement may be expected gradually to lessen political tension which does so much to limit confidence and retard further recovery.

The Report and Accounts were unanimously adopted. An Extraordinary General Meeting was then held for the purpose of passing the Special Resolutions to effect the sub-division of the Bank's Capital, which were duly approved.

A vote of thanks to the Chairman concluded the proceedings.

Week-end Competitions

No. 412

Set by B. W.

We are accustomed to the admiration felt by publishers for authors, as expressed in their advertisements. But a new note has been struck by Mr. Claude Houghton, who gives vent in an advertisement to his admiration for his own latest novel. "My new novel is not just the familiar story of husband, wife and mistress. It is that, and its treatment is such that suspense becomes cumulative with the turning of every page, but it is much more than that. Here is the truth about many a marriage. And every character in this book is a novel. Etc., etc." Since other authors for some reason have failed to employ this method of calling their wares, you are invited to do so for them; and the usual prizes will be given for the best puffs (in not more than 250 words) written for one of their books by any one of the following: Browne, Sterne, Jane Austen, Macaulay, Darwin, Samuel Butler, Disraeli, Carlyle, Pater, Henry James, Ouida, Firbank, Kipling.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, February 4th.

2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.

3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 410

Set by Frederick Laws

The usual prizes (Two Guineas and Half a Guinea) are offered for the best sets of four new conversational openings. They should be genuinely icebreaking and serviceable in more than one social milieu. "Do you like string?" has the necessary universality. "Have you read any good books lately?" has not.

Report by Frederick Laws

Over sixty people, including most of the Old Guard, thought this was an easy competition. Many of the questions submitted were unanswerable, and the majority would start a fight or a debate but never a conversation. Gas-masks, one's host, dogs versus children, cures for a cold, methods of making coffee, prohibition, betting, royalty, and bathroom behaviour were the predominant themes. The best single opening came from M. B. Gallacher: "You remind me of my great-aunt, the detective." A list follows of other suggestions which seemed practicable and reasonably new.

"Are you saved?" (A. W. Sainsbury.)

"Do you like snakes?" (B. H. H.)

"You're like someone in a film I once saw." (Coleridge Hills.)

"What beautiful trousers!" (O. S. S.)

"Pardon my question, but when did you last see your father?" (Edna.)

"Do you know the roasted man at the British Museum?" (Ursula Wyndham.)

"Have you change for a pawn-ticket?" (W. R. Davies.)

"Which end of the bath do you sit?" (C. F. Cooke.)

"Have you begun to write your autobiography yet?" (Little Billee.)

"Would you rather not talk?" (E. G.)

One competitor—who shall be nameless—wanted to know "In what degree is a politician a mountebank and how far is a mountebank a simulacrum?" He also wondered whether a crank was a visionary, and what the value of hectic existence could be.

My four final choices—C. O. L. C., Miss Ursula Wyndham, L. M. Larking, and E. B. C. Jones—were all much of a muchness, and all had one weak line. First prize goes to C. O. L. C., Wadham College, Oxford, and Second to E. B. C. Jones.

FIRST PRIZE

(1) I wonder when beards will come into fashion again.
(2) You know, really I think doctors are comparatively honest.
(3) Do you have interesting dreams?
(4) I can't remember anything before I was six; aren't I backward?

C. O. L. C.

SECOND PRIZE

(1) Have you been ill lately?
(2) Aren't you absolutely sick of Mickey Mouse?
(3) Do you like red finger-nails?
(4) I'm a highbrow—what are you?

E. B. C. JONES.

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 265.—DAFFODIL AND DAPHNE

"It's disgusting," said Daphne. "I haven't done as well as Daffodil did the first time she competed."

The occasion was the final round of the Inter-House gymnastic display. Each of the ten houses was represented by its best gymnast, and at the end of the display points were awarded as follows:

To competitors placed in Class A:

2 points in respect of each competitor placed in Class B, and 5 points in respect of each competitor placed in Class C.

To competitors placed in Class B:

2 points in respect of each competitor placed in Class C, less 3 points in respect of each competitor placed in Class A.

To competitors placed in Class C:

2 points lost for each competitor placed in Class B; 5 points lost for each competitor placed in Class A.

A competitor's points (positive or negative) were taken into account in assessing the standing of her House for the Inter-House Athletic Cup.

Daphne had done well, and yet, as I could see, she was bitterly disappointed. "I did think I'd do better than Daffodil," she said. "Better than she did the first year, I mean."

"And how did she do her second year?" I asked.

"Marvellously," said Daphne. "She scored twice as many points as she'd scored the year before."

That was my cue. "You cheer up, Daphne," I said. "You're sure to be representing your House next year—after what you've done this time—and I shouldn't be surprised if you too don't double your score."

"As it happens," replied Daphne tartly, "that isn't possible."

How many points has Daphne scored?

PROBLEM 263.—THE BRAVEBEARDS

Brutus Bravebeard served four years as Major.

The following table shows each brother's service in years:

	Lieut.	Capt.	Major.	Col.	Commt.
(1)	2	1	1	5	1
(2)	1	2	2	4	1
(3)	1	2	3	2	2
(4)	1	1	4	3	1
(5)	1	1	5	1	2

Brutus is clearly No. 4.

PROBLEM 262.—PROMOTIONS AT PINHEAD

A set of Low's cartoons goes to: C. S. Betts, King Edward VI School, Nuneaton, Warwick.

Six points are awarded.

To Solvers: (1) Correct solutions have been received this week to Problems 263 and 264 from Bristol and Cambridge, the senders of which have omitted to mention names and addresses. Will they please rectify?

(2) Solvers frequently send names on separate sheets from their solutions; in sorting the solutions these names are apt to get lost. I prefer the name and address at the head of the solution.

(3) Questions about scores, comments and suggestions are often scribbled at the foot of a solution. These can easily be overlooked; they should, please, be sent on separate sheets.

SOLVERS' DINNER

A dinner for Caliban solvers and their friends will take place on Friday, April 1st [No, no sort of hoax!] at the Northumberland Rooms, Grand Buildings, Trafalgar Square. Time: 7 for 7.30 p.m. Morning dress.

Tickets, 5s. per head (exclusive of drink) can be obtained from Miss Kathleen Salmons, 22 Chancery Lane, W.C.2. The accommodation available is not likely to be exhausted, but we should like to hear in good time from those who are thinking of coming.

PRIZES FOR PROBLEM SOLVERS

A set of Low's cartoons is awarded to the sender of a correct solution selected at random.

In addition, a record is kept of correct solutions sent, and of the points scored weekly by solvers. On attaining 100 points a solver is entitled to a prize consisting of any book (or books) reviewed or advertised in these columns, of a value not greater than 10s. Solvers who have won a prize on this basis are eligible for a second prize on attaining a further 120 points, and for a third prize on attaining a further 150. Solutions must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o the Editor, and must reach this office not later than Tuesday week following publication of the problem. Solutions to two problems may be sent in one envelope, but on separate sheets of paper.

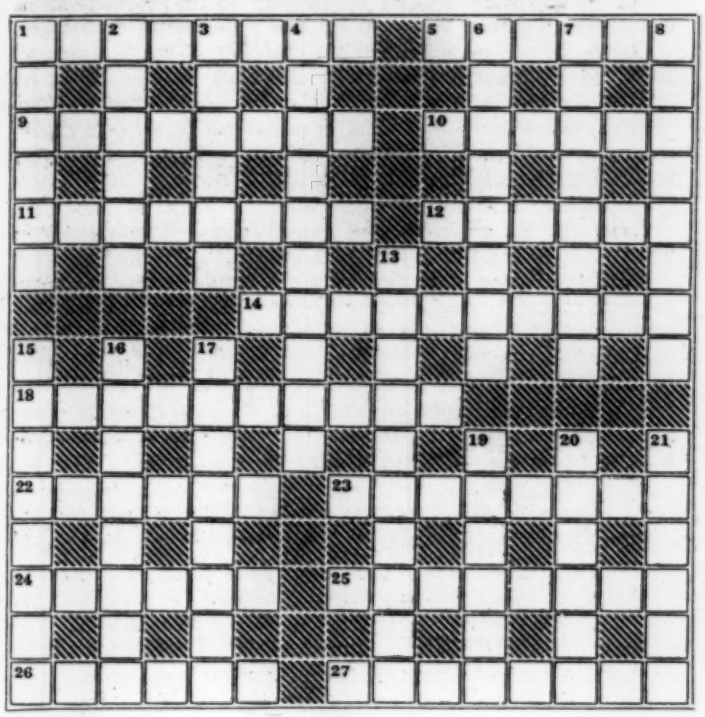
Some indication should be given of the method of solution.

[U.S.A. Competitors. The Editor regrets that the prizes offered in our Week-end Competitions cannot apply to American competitors.]

CALIBAN

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 412

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is
Miss H. M. Kidd, 13 Glanville Road, Bromley, Kent.

ACROSS

1. You'd never get sidetracked on this. (8)
5. Stickybacks. (6)
9. Clothes for cheerful rioting? (8)
10. Cooks often do before service. (6)
11. What one does when there is too much stuffing. (8)
12. Charlotte's fictitious bell. (6)
14. What the papers said, for a change. (10)
18. Equine equivalent of 8 birds in the bush. (10)
22. In the manner of Macduff leading on. (6)
23. Where to see the flakes dancing. (8)
24. The Princess of our electrical system. (6)
25. State of being tended gratis. (8)
26. Equivalent of "run to earth" in a cat hunt. (6)
27. Results of a "rubber" shoe perhaps. (8)

DOWN

1. An old fancy to have in the head. (6)
2. I'm above such muddly games. (6)
3. One of the lesser food stores. (6)
4. Just moonshine. (10)
6. Depressed piles. (8)
7. One of the commonest going concerns nowadays. (8)
8. How to constrain one to a meal? (8)
13. Sounds like an all-round ecclesiastic, very militant. (10)
15. Cricket stroke that golfers do first to last. (8)
16. Possible result of hot cross buns. (8)
17. February. (8)
19. They go in for proprietary articles. (6)
20. Elizabethan Queen. (6)
21. Ocean fastnesses? (6)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

■	■	C	A	R	P	E	T	T	A	C	K	S	■	■
C	■	A	■	E	■	C	■	O	■	A	■	H	■	W
O	N	T	H	E	N	A	I	L	■	U	N	I	T	E
S	■	E	■	D	■	L	■	E	■	G	■	N	■	S
T	I	C	K	S	■	P	A	R	C	H	M	E	N	T
O	■	H	■	■	■	■	A	■	T	■	■	■	■	E
F	L	I	N	T	■	G	U	N	C	O	T	T	O	N
L	■	S	■	H	■	O	■	C	■	U	■	U	■	D
I	N	T	E	R	P	O	S	E	■	T	U	R	P	S
V	■	■	■	E	■	D	■	■	■	■	■	N	■	T
I	L	L	N	E	S	S	E	S	■	D	U	R	I	O
N	■	I	■	S	■	P	■	U	■	E	■	O	■	R
G	U	S	T	O	■	O	U	T	O	F	T	U	N	E
■	■	A	■	M	■	R	■	O	■	O	■	N	■	■
■	A	B	S	E	N	T	F	R	I	E	N	D	S	■

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By DIVES

WALL STREET SLUMP—RUBBER RESTRICTION—BANKERS' SPEECHES—CABLE EARNINGS

So stagnant is business on the London Stock Exchange that some jobbers have opened a book on Princess Juliana's baby, just to pass the time away. Lively dealings began on the basis of 7¾ to 8 (in lbs.), and it has not yet been decided whether twins are a bull or a bear point. It is sad that this market will shortly be closed, leaving jobbers to contemplate the blank pages of their books. Only the gilt-edged market has the semblance of life, and if no other attractions appear soon it may well develop into a little boom. In Wall Street at first idleness prevailed. The daily turnover had dwindled to below 800,000 shares, and there was a complete lack of speculative interest. This was due partly to the increasing restrictions which are being laid upon trading—witness the new rules this week against short-selling—and partly to the indeterminate character of the conferences between Mr. Roosevelt and the business executives. On Wednesday, however, the volume of trading rapidly increased on the downward side. The disappointing earnings of U.S. Steel and the (to Wall Street) disturbing statement of Mr. Roosevelt to the press that he was "unequivocally opposed" to wage-cutting, and that he thought industry should increase production even at the risk of financial loss, caused a wave of panicky selling. How far does the President intend to co-operate with business? Does he mean to co-operate only with small business and persist in his fight against monopolies and big business? After the President's efforts to stabilise the oil industry it is strange that sixteen oil companies should have been convicted by a Federal Jury on the charge of violating the Sherman Anti-Trust Act by fixing petrol prices. If Mr. Roosevelt really lacks a clear-cut economic policy it is not surprising that business confidence is again conspicuous by its absence. Why, asks the City, does the President not stop talking politics and follow the easy road of orthodox monetary inflation? Even the Bank of England might co-operate with him in pursuing so respectable a monetary policy.

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The 90 per cent. rubber quota in force during the latter half of 1937 had the effect of increasing world stocks to over 500,000 tons. This would have been equivalent to about 5½ months' consumption at last year's average rate, but manufacturers' in-take has been declining rapidly as the result of the business slump in the United States. Up to the end of September world consumption averaged 253,000 tons per quarter, but in October–December it fell to 230,000 tons. On present indications world requirements in 1938 will be well below 1,000,000 tons, so that stocks represent over 6 months' supply in hand. In these circumstances the 70 per cent. export quota fixed by the International Rubber Committee for the first 3 months of the year clearly did not represent a sufficient measure of restriction. It would have allowed stocks to pile up to unwieldy dimensions and courted the risk of a serious break in the price of the commodity. As it is, if the export quota remains at 60 per cent. for April–December, fresh supplies will be of the order of 900,000 tons—amply sufficient unless there is an unexpectedly rapid revival of consumption in the United States, whose tyre manufacturers are believed to be heavily stocked both with the raw material and with finished goods. I see little attraction at present in investment in rubber shares. Last year's earnings, with the export quota averaging 85 per cent. and the selling price about 9*d*. per pound, were not unsatisfactory in the case of well-managed estates whose capitalisation per acre is moderate. This year, with the price of rubber around 7*d*. a pound, and the export quota down to 60 per cent., the results will be leaner, and the share market seems likely to drift to lower levels pending American recovery.

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In discussing the economic outlook this year, the bankers' speeches at meetings of shareholders have struck a note of distinctly qualified optimism. Prophecies of imminent depression have been duly deprecated as tending to destroy confidence and cripple initiative; but all the addresses so far delivered have contained admissions that last autumn saw signs of a "pause." Mr. Edwin Fisher, chairman of Barclay's Bank, declared last week that he saw "little justification for undue concern" over this country's prospects: trade was still good, and though we might not be immune from the effects of recession in the United States, British production was still running at a satisfactory level. Nevertheless, like Mr. C. F. Campbell, the National Provincial chairman, Mr. Fisher warned industrialists not to neglect export markets just because home trade was temporarily active; and he reminded his audience that alternative work would have to be found by important sections of industry when the stimulus of rearmament demand had waned. The importance of that particular factor was minimised by the chairman of the Westminster Bank, Mr. Rupert Beckett, who observed in his speech on Wednesday that a supplementary annual expenditure of £150 millions on defence bulked small in relation to a £3,500 to £4,000 million gross annual output of British industry. For every twenty-four persons already in employment, the rearmament programme had so far provided work for an extra one. Mr. Beckett, like his confrères, was emphatic that British economy was still in robust health, but he admitted that further progress was conditional on a revival in the United States. The importance of the American factor in any appraisement of Britain's economic outlook was also emphasised by Mr. McKenna at the Midland Bank meeting. He expressed confidence that no comparable collapse of enterprise need be feared in this country, and contrasted the favourable experience of the past six years under a managed currency with the unhappy reactions of our attachment to a rigid gold standard in 1925–31.

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The combined end-year balance sheet of the "Big Five" banks shows that, as compared with a year ago, cash has fallen fractionally from £225,400,000 to £223,600,000. As a result, the previous year's large increase in deposits (no less than £137 millions) has not been repeated. During 1937 deposits rose by only £18 millions to £2,034 millions. But there was a considerable shift in the distribution of assets. Investments, at £532 millions, are nearly £21 millions down, while advances to customers have risen from £765 millions to £852 millions, or nearly 42 per cent. of deposits. This increase in advances has been accompanied by a proportionate decline in money at call and short loans. Advances and investments combined now represent 68 per cent. of deposits—a proportion which suggests that the banks cannot greatly increase financial aid to industry, and at the same time support the gilt-edged market, unless the Bank of England injects more cash into the system. So far, the policy of the authorities appears to be to keep money easy, with bankers' deposits at a more or less stable level. In some quarters it has been suggested that the Public Departments have been actively supporting gilt-edged stocks with a view to the early placing of a further tranche of National Defence Loan. I question the likelihood of an issue this side of Budget Day. Revenue is flowing in strongly and defence expenditure is barely keeping up to the expected rate. The Treasury is in no need of additional cash at present; and the only ground for an early issue would be if the authorities looked for a revival of speculative activity which led to switching by institutional investors from fixed-interest stocks to equities. Of such a development I can see little prospect on any reasonable estimation of the trade outlook. More probable is it that the field will be left clear at present for municipal borrowers to place loans and re-finance some of their existing issues.

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It was not so long ago that the directors of Cable and Wireless were expressing the hope—on the occasion of the capital reorganisation scheme—that it would be possible to pay a 4 per cent. dividend on the new ordinary stock in respect of 1937. This stock has since fallen from 84 to 64, and still looks fully valued on short-term prospects. The company's traffic index figure has averaged 78.9 over the year, against 74.4 in 1936, and on this basis the preference stock dividends of £922,000 should have been covered with a margin of about £350,000, equivalent to over 5 per cent. on the ordinary stock. The 5½ per cent. preference stock at 103 to yield about £5 7*s*. 6*d*. per cent. is, therefore, the more reasonably valued stock, but, even so, if the traffic index were to fall to below 71 for any length of time the preference stock dividends might be short-earned, unless the company were to receive some concessions from the Post Office. I still prefer Globe Telegraph shares at 15¼. Even without the help of a dividend from its large holding (£968,000) of Cable and Wireless ordinary stock, Globe Telegraph should be able to earn 6½ per cent. tax free, and the increase in the interim dividend suggests that the year's distribution will be raised by 1 per cent. to 6½ per cent. tax free. At 15¼ Globe Telegraph would then yield £5 12*s*. 6*d*. per cent.

Company Meeting

WESTMINSTER BANK LIMITED

THE HON. RUPERT E. BECKETT'S ADDRESS

THE Annual Ordinary General Meeting of Westminster Bank Limited was held on Wednesday last at the Head Office, Lothbury, E.C. The Hon. Rupert E. Beckett (chairman) presided.

The Chairman opened his address with a reference to the changes in the Directorate which had occurred during 1937. He referred to the loss sustained through the death of Sir Gervase Beckett and reported that Lord Dudley and Lord Runciman had joined the Board. Continuing, he said (in part):

Current, Deposit and Other Accounts showed an increase of close upon £1 million. The weekly average deposits of the eleven Clearing Banks have been £71 million in excess of those of 1936, and the Westminster Bank average accounted for £22 million. Inasmuch as the average figures, and not those on the Balance Sheet date, form the basis of the Bank's earning power, I think we may regard with satisfaction the course of the year's trading. Our Advances to Customers and Other Accounts show a welcome increase during the year of something in excess of £11 million. Almost the whole of this has been provided out of our short-term money, and the higher rate of interest thereby obtained has naturally improved the Bank's earning capacity.

PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT

The profit for the year, at £1,750,589, is, you will be pleased to hear, the best declaration since 1930. After payment of the usual dividends, we have made an allocation to Bank Premises Account of £200,000. Our allocation to Officers' Pension Fund is £300,000—an increase of £100,000. This increase has been rendered desirable by facts brought out in the course of an actuarial revaluation of the Fund. The Directors have felt justified, without serious depletion of the carry-forward figure, in declaring on the partly-paid shares a bonus of 2 per cent. I wish to emphasise that this is a bonus, as its name implies, and not a restoration of the dividend to the 20 per cent. which was paid on these shares for some years before 1931.

THE ECONOMIC SITUATION

The history of 1937 was one of continued progress during the greater part of the year, succeeded by a slight but perceptible pause in the closing months. The peak of our progress was reached in the early autumn, up to which time almost all the generally accepted business indices had a favourable trend, reaching the highest points achieved since the depression, and in some cases the highest ever recorded. Industrial production, as measured by the Board of Trade, continued to increase, being on the average 8 per cent. greater than in 1936, and it was particularly satisfactory that almost every branch of industry included in the calculation of this index shared in the expansion. Our overseas trade moved up steadily each month as compared with the corresponding month of the previous year, the year's imports showing a rise in value of 21 per cent., and exports one of 18 per cent. The relative expansion of the two sides of our overseas trade has, however, been obscured by the rise of prices, the import figures having been more strongly influenced in this respect than the export. It is an interesting point, not commonly appreciated, that whilst our imports increased in volume by 6 per cent. in the first nine months of last year (the twelve months' figures not yet being available), our exports were as much as 12 per cent. larger. The employment situation continued to improve over most of the year, the decline in the number of unemployed from January to September exceeding 280,000, whilst every month until August saw a fresh record created in the total number of persons in employment. The figures for the last three months showed a reversal of this favourable movement, but, nevertheless, the final statistics for the year, with a total of 11,437,000 in employment, remained some 200,000 above the comparable figure for 1936. Railway traffics, which benefited only in the last three months by the 5 per cent. increase in passenger fares and freight rates, registered an advance in gross receipts for the year of £7 million, or 4½ per cent. Retail trade, though showing some regional variation, was on the whole substantially larger, and industrial profits had a rising trend.

The Chairman then reviewed the experience of the main industries of the country during the past year, and continuing, said:

In the autumn the publication of unemployment returns came as a severe shock even to those who had foreseen some deterioration. The existence of a setback was confirmed by other statistical data which were almost uniformly less favourable in the closing months of the year. That our recovery could continue indefinitely, without intermission, was not to be expected, and the movement recently perceptible is at present only a slowing-down of activity, liable to attract exaggerated attention when it succeeds a long period of unbroken progress. The steadiness of our recovery from the depression suggests that it is of a permanent and long-term character, much more likely to endure because of its gradual growth.

The Chairman then dealt at length with the situation in America, concluding with a comparison of price movements in New York and London. Speaking of the adverse influence of American fluctuations, he said: The measure of resistance that can be opposed to it depends largely on the inherent strength of the established economy of this country. He continued:

Fundamentally, British industry is still in robust strength, which has been attained largely without adventitious aids. Rearmament comes under the last heading, and it has been urged in some quarters that our present trade prosperity is due to this factor. This argument is not tenable, however, for two reasons: first, that a good measure of prosperity was established before the rearmament programme was embarked upon; and second, that the additional work, though large in actual amount, represents but a fraction of the total output of industry. It would appear that for every twenty-four persons already in employment, the rearmament programme has so far provided work for an extra one.

Employment arising from rearmament is likely to continue, possibly on an increasing scale, for some long time ahead, and the big developments undertaken by the railways and other large employers of labour, in addition to their normal programmes, will assist in the same direction. Another factor making for stability is the relatively large purchasing power of the wage-earning section of the community.

Moreover, participation in the enhanced prosperity of the past few years has not been confined to the wage-earning classes; the standard of living of the community as a whole has steadily improved.

From a social point of view, the improvement in the common welfare of the people is a development to be welcomed, and from the viewpoint of national safety rearmament is a necessity which we have been forced to adopt. Yet both, desirable or unavoidable in themselves, have far-reaching implications in the economic sphere. Our imports last year cost £181 million more than in 1936, and the increase of £95 million in our exports, satisfactory though it was, was sufficient to pay for little more than a half of the additional imports. The gap between imports and exports has thus widened by £86 million. In 1936, when our receipts from "invisible" exports had been taken into account, our trade balance was estimated by the Board of Trade to be £19 million on the wrong side. For last year, we have to find a further £86 million, and although shipping, banking and insurance receipts, and income from overseas investments, will undoubtedly show improvement, the final figure will be on the debit side again and substantially higher than that for 1936.

In view of the obstacles encountered in many foreign countries, with two leading nations committed to closed economies, from which all but the most essential imports are rigidly excluded, and with armed conflicts proceeding in Europe and Asia, it is remarkable that so much progress, or indeed any progress at all, has been made by our export trade. Nevertheless, failure to pay for our imports for two years in succession emphasises anew that intensified efforts must be put forth still further to expand our overseas markets.

For many years now, the proportion of our total production absorbed by exports has been declining. To some extent, this is an inevitable process in the country which was first in the manufacturing field and has since taught the world to produce for itself, but it is one whose pace can and must be minimised. Our home market to-day is flourishing, but if it is prospering, even to a limited extent, at the expense of export trade, this is a price we can ill afford to pay. Our essential dependence upon imports for so large a part of our food and raw materials makes the further development of export trade an inescapable obligation, and the combined energies of government, manufacturer, merchant, and banker must be devoted to this end. British industry has been enabled through the years of prosperity to readjust its organisation and enhance its efficiency, but to widen its scope it will have to look increasingly abroad.

The immediate outlook for export trade continues to be favourable within the limits still imposed by outside influences. Prices of primary products, though finishing the year below the highest points touched, were on the average substantially above those ruling in 1936. Primary producing countries have thus shared in the further recovery of the past year, and with their enhanced incomes, the prospects favour an expanding demand for manufactured goods, in the satisfaction of which we should participate.

In recent years, economic progress has everywhere been overshadowed by political developments, as has been forcibly brought home to us on more than one occasion during the past twelve months. We owe a debt of gratitude to those in charge of our destinies, who so far have preserved this country from active embroilment in the lamentable events that we see around us. It is the heartfelt wish of every one of us that they may meet with continued success in the hard task to which they are devoting their energies.

I have put forward a plea for sober judgment of our economic position, and have endeavoured to show that to take alarm at this juncture is harmful and unwarranted. Our pace has slackened, but our reserve of strength and our stamina should sustain us through the present vicissitudes and enable us fully to play our part whatever the future may have in store for us.

The Report and Accounts were unanimously adopted and other formal business transacted.

MIDLAND BANK LIMITED

THE RIGHT HON. REGINALD McKENNA'S ADDRESS

THE Ordinary General Meeting of shareholders of the Midland Bank Limited was held in London on Wednesday, January 26th, 1938.

The Chairman, the Right Hon. R. McKenna, said (in part): The year 1937 opened with a good prospect of sustained business improvement. The industrial outlook was so promising, indeed, that fears were expressed of a coming boom. There were signs of growing speculation on the stock exchange and in raw materials; some commodities, particularly metals, had made a disturbing jump. Speculation, however, was speedily checked by a reduction in the quantity of money, and a decline in prices followed. The decline went so far as to cause some anxiety, and, although the quantity of money was later restored, the closing months of the year that had opened buoyantly were marked by a more subdued outlook.

Meanwhile depressing influences had been at work in the United States. In April President Roosevelt declared that some prices, particularly of the non-ferrous metals, were too high. At the same time the gold scare, based largely on unjustified inferences from that statement, gave rise to fears of a restrictive monetary policy and precipitated a general decline in Stock Exchange quotations and primary commodity prices. But what might have been no more than a temporary break developed in the United States into a real business recession. The confidence of industrialists, already disturbed by the policy of the Government, became seriously shaken, and capital construction was arrested. Happily, no similar obstacle to business enterprise is present in Great Britain, and there is no indication here that the drop in Stock Exchange quotations and commodity prices will lead to a comparable decline in general trade.

It is natural that a setback first in prices and then in trade should be taken to confirm the fears of people who are dubious about both the theory and practice of a managed currency. Management has meant cheap and abundant money, and in their view long-continued cheap money must lead to over-expansion of industry and trade, which has its inevitable reaction in a slump. The alleged benefits of cheap money, they tell us, have been exaggerated, while the danger of inflation is always present. Now they see that a fall in prices and a drop in employment have taken place while money is still cheap, and they regard this as definite condemnation of a managed currency.

We shall all agree that the question of the right method of currency and credit control is of the greatest importance to the whole country. For banks in particular the subject has a special significance. A few years ago the very conception of a purely managed currency was something new; in no country were the conditions such as to make it practicable; it is only conceivable as being efficiently practised in a country with banking and credit highly centralised and with a government maintaining national credit unimpaired. Much had to be learnt and is being learnt, but, however difficult it may be to put on one side the ideas to which long usage of the gold standard has accustomed us, we find in practice that the system is working smoothly. In the light of our present knowledge a managed currency can no longer be regarded as a mere temporary makeshift while the gold standard is in abeyance.

COMPARISON OF EXPERIENCE 1925–31 AND 1931–7.

To judge between the two systems the question we must ask is: How have we fared while our currency has been free to fluctuate without reference to any backing other than the country's credit? What have been the changes in our economic condition? Many causes contribute to such changes, and among these monetary policy is certainly one of the most important. Let me recall what has happened in recent years. It will be remembered that the gold standard, having been suspended on the outbreak of war, was brought into operation again in April, 1925. It was maintained for over six years until September, 1931, when once again it was suspended. For the first time we then set about controlling our currency without any active effort to restore the gold standard. We started a true experiment in management, and the experiment has now lasted for a period almost precisely as long as the restored gold standard was in operation, that is for rather over six years from September 1931 to the present time. In answering the question, then, how have we fared, we can compare our economic condition during two equal periods, one on gold and the other under management.

I take the Bank of England's stock of gold as the first subject for comparison. In April, 1925, it stood at £154 millions; by September, 1931, it had fallen to £135 millions; but by January, 1938, it had risen to £326 millions at the statutory price. At the current price the value of the existing stock would be about £530 millions, quite apart from the gold held in the Exchange Equalisation Account. It is clear that our position has been immensely strengthened by the great increase in our stock during the period of a managed currency. The Cunliffe Committee put our minimum need of gold reserve at £150 millions. The Macmillan Committee increased the requirement, whether in gold or foreign exchange, to a maximum of £225 millions. As events have developed it has become apparent that even these resources would not suffice to provide against capital movements on the scale that we now see. Including the amount held in the Exchange Equalisation Account, our present stock at the current value of gold is about £800 millions, and if we set this against the probable total of our foreign liabilities, expanded though they may be, we must conclude that our position is far stronger than in 1931.

Next we may note fluctuations in the burden of the national debt. There has been little change in the amount of the debt, but a great change in the interest paid. Excluding the American debt and interest on savings certificates, the national returns show that in the year ending March, 1926, the first year of the return to the gold standard, the charge was over £271 millions. In 1931–2 it had fallen by £13 millions. But in 1936–7 it was no more than £200 millions, a saving of nearly £60 millions a year since the introduction of a managed currency. Cheap and abundant money made possible the conversion of the old 5 per cent. War Loan into a 3½ per cent. stock, while on Treasury bills alone the saving is approximately £17 millions a year. When the demands upon the Exchequer are as heavy as they are to-day, both for national defence and social services, I cannot imagine any Chancellor of the Exchequer closing his eyes to the immense economy in the service of the debt that has been made as a result of monetary policy.

The relative degree of cheapness and abundance of money in the two periods is indicated by a comparison of the Bank rate and the quantity of bank deposits. From 1925 to 1931 the average Bank rate was approximately 4 $\frac{5}{16}$ per cent. On the abandonment of the gold standard the rate was raised to 6 per cent. as a precautionary measure which was soon found to be unnecessary. It was lowered by stages until at the end of June, 1932, it stood at 2 per cent., where it has remained ever since. There was no less than sixteen changes of Bank rate in the first period of six years, all of them consequent upon the obligation imposed on the Bank of England to protect its meagre gold stock. The subsequent stability at 2 per cent. has lasted over five and a half years. No previous period of stability of so long duration can be found in the last hundred years, a fact which suggests that the frequent description of present money rates as abnormal is hardly justified. The effect of freedom from the restrictions imposed by the gold standard is no less apparent in the quantity of money than in the rate paid for its use. Bank deposits, which were about £1,800 millions on the average for 1931, rose to nearly £2,300 millions in 1937.

TRADE AND EMPLOYMENT.

The increase in purchasing power shown by this growth of deposits has been as beneficial to industry and trade as to the Treasury. Let us look first at weekly wage rates, taking rates in 1924 as the basic figure of 100. In 1925 the corresponding figure was 102; by 1931 it had fallen below 97; but by last year it had risen again above 103. Taking the same year as the basis, profits, according to Sir Josiah Stamp's calculation, stood at 104 in 1925, dropped to 77 in 1931, but rose again to 120 in 1936, the last year for which this index is available. The figures of industrial production repeat the same story in another form—a decline over the first six years and a rise in the second by perhaps fifty per cent. Thus it is evident that, while business was on balance dropping away in the earlier period, it was steadily improving in the later.

Wages and profits are a measure of the incomes of the mass of the population. Production measures the degree in which our industrial capacity is being used; it governs the total of employment and unemployment, the returns for which make perhaps a more striking comparison than any others. Between 1925 and 1931 the total of our insured workers rose by 1,200,000, but the employed fell by 200,000, and the unemployed rose in consequence by 1,400,000. This was how we stood at the end of the first six-year period. In the second the insured workers increased by a further 800,000, but the number of those employed grew by as much as 2,100,000, thus reducing the unemployed by well over a million. What a contrast! a decline in employment of 200,000 in the first period; an increase of 2,100,000 in the second. No figures could be more convincing; no figures could exemplify more clearly the change in our economic condition in the two periods. I have not suggested, and I would not for a moment do so, that the pronounced improvement in our position as between the two periods is due solely to the change in the monetary system. But I do suggest that there is nothing in our present condition to indicate that the change has been other than for the better or that it is fraught with unknown perils in the future.

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MIDLAND BANK LIMITED

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I have said nothing about wholesale price levels, since, as we have seen in the past year, these are subject to such rapid fluctuation that a comparison of index numbers for given dates is not a safe guide to a lasting trend. I may, however, remind you that over the period 1925 to 1931 there was in fact a downward trend which weighed heavily upon primary producers and exercised a constant dragging effect upon business. Since 1931 some recovery has taken place, with beneficial effects apparent to everyone, in the growth of world trade and the expansion of demand for the products of British industry.

Balance of Payments

Last year, you may remember, I referred to the balance of current international payments and receipts as a test of safety in deciding whether an expansive monetary policy might be pursued further. Unfortunately, we have no certain knowledge of the true balance of payments. There can be no doubt that the requirements of rearmament and the growing volume of consumption due to greater employment necessitate additional purchases of goods from abroad in excess of our sales. The import surplus of merchandise is increasing. The other elements in the account are not so readily estimated, but when we consider the position as a whole it is difficult to believe, notwithstanding the official estimates, that the final balance is against us.

Here again it is helpful to take a longer view than is given by the figures for a single year. The official estimates of the balance of payments for 1932–6 show a net deficit for the five years approaching £50 millions. To this we must add at least an equal amount for last year, making an aggregate of over £100 millions. The figures prepared by Sir Robert Kindersley indicate that we have drawn to some extent upon our long-term capital abroad, a fact which would fit the supposition of a deficiency on current account. But in these six years we have spent on the purchase of gold now held in the Bank of England and the Exchange Equalisation Account an amount approximating £600 millions. If the official estimates be accepted, this expenditure could have been offset only by sales of British securities to foreigners and by an increase in our short-term liabilities. No evidence has been adduced of sales of securities on such a scale or of any vast increase in short-term liabilities, and it appears in consequence very doubtful whether our capital position has moved against us in any degree comparable with the addition to our gold reserves. On the evidence of gold and capital movements, the contention that over the past six years we have been living upon capital does not appear to be well founded. The matter is of real importance, as we must not lose sight of the fact that any continued worsening of our current international account would call for a restrictive monetary policy.

I have now covered the ground which has to be surveyed in order to compare our experience in the two periods, characterised by radically different monetary arrangements. We have had far greater freedom under present conditions in adapting our policy to rapidly changing circumstances. The instruments with which trade can be stimulated or speculation checked are readily available for use. Already a great deal has been learnt about the principles and practice of a free monetary system, and I do not doubt that as fine a technique will be developed under the new system as we ever had when working on the gold standard.

Position and Progress of the Bank.

In turning to the affairs of our own bank I deeply regret that my first task should be to record the death of two members of the board, Mr. Henry Allan and Mr. R. A. Murray. Their places on our board have been filled by two other distinguished directors of The Clydesdale Bank, Sir Harold Yarrow, who was appointed to the chairmanship of the Scottish bank in succession to Mr. Allan, and Sir George Mitchell. Our own board has been strengthened by the appointment of Sir John Anderson, who comes to us recommended by outstanding personal qualities and a varied experience in administration at home and abroad.

The profit and loss account shows that the recovery in earning power was maintained with the continuance of monetary expansion and trade improvement. Allowing for income tax and the new national defence contribution, both of which are provided for before the profit is struck, the 1937 net profit of £2,508,000 records an encouraging increase on the year and a restoration approximately to the pre-slump level. The improvement in the quality of our advances has reduced the amount we have had to reserve against possible bad debts.

The profit for the year, added to the balance brought forward, makes the total sum available £3,055,000, and out of this we have already paid £855,000 by way of interim dividend at the rate of sixteen per cent. per annum less income tax. We have allocated £300,000, the same amount as a year ago, to reserve for future contingencies, and £400,000, that is £50,000 more than last year, to reduction of bank premises account. The increased appropriation under this head is called for by the expenditure upon premises resulting from the continued growth of our business. In particular, our head office is nearing completion; one of the new wings is already occupied, and work on the other is proceeding rapidly. After these allocations there remains a sum of £1,500,000, out of which we propose to pay a final dividend again at the rate of sixteen per cent. per annum less income tax. In consequence of the recent increase in our capital this requires the larger sum of £909,000, and we are left with an addition of £44,000 to the carry forward, raising it to £591,000.

In the balance sheet the capital paid up and reserve fund show the effect of the recent new issue. As you know, in October last shareholders were given the right to subscribe for one fully-paid share of £1, at a price of £2, for every £20 of paid-up capital held. This offer entailed the issue of roughly 700,000 shares. Following our practice, we also offered new shares at the same price to members of the staff of the bank and its affiliations, in proportion to status and years of service. On this account about 200,000 shares have been issued. The aggregate addition to our paid-up capital is rather more than £900,000, and, the premium of £1 per share having been carried to the reserve fund, an equal addition is made to that item.

In deciding upon this increase of capital we were influenced by the growth of the volume of our business since the last issue, in 1930. Our deposit liabilities have expanded considerably over the period; last year, for example, they rose by nearly £10 millions, bringing the total to a new balance sheet record of £496 millions.

The assets side of the balance sheet shows the maintenance of a high standard of liquidity, the "quick" assets covering over 36 per cent. of deposit liabilities. Cash alone is a million higher. Our own bill portfolio has risen by nearly £9 millions on the year, wholly under the heading of discounts as opposed to Treasury bills. Although rates in the money market are still very low, they give us at least a modest return on funds which for reasons of liquidity we should otherwise have to retain in the unremunerative form of cash.

The largest movement on the balance sheet is to be found in advances, which have risen over the year by nearly £19 millions, a more rapid rate of growth than in 1936.

In commenting upon the movement in advances I may mention that the highest figure was reached in June, 1929, when they stood at £224 millions. The lowest point was reached in 1934, since when there has been a total increase of £44 millions. Of this amount a large part has been granted to borrowers not directly engaged in industry or trade, for instance the special fixed loans to local authorities, and advances for financial purposes, especially to facilitate permanent investment in real estate and other assets. But the tide has now turned; the demand for short-term industrial and trade advances has shown an appreciable revival during the past year. Our own internal figures give evidence of this revival most clearly in the engineering trades, some branches of the clothing industries, retail trade, entertainments and public services. It is seen also in building, a fact which indicates that the long-expected slackening in building activity as a whole has not yet become serious. Apart from these groups, the increase is widely spread.

After dealing with the affiliated banks (The Belfast Banking Company, The North of Scotland Bank, The Clydesdale Bank, and The Executor and Trustee Company), he continued: In considering the future of the bank I am happy to report that the spirit of good will and loyal service which characterises our staff is fully maintained. Among other good work undertaken by the Staff Association is one purely disinterested service which I take special pleasure in mentioning. This is the collection from the staff of an annual amount running into several thousands of pounds for the purpose of giving financial support to various projects in distressed areas for relieving the ill-effects of long unemployment. It is a task in which all those participating may be proud to have their share.

The Business Outlook.

But what of the factors beyond our control? When we look to the future I see no ground for pessimism. We must not, it is true, under-rate the importance of American developments in their effect on other parts of the world. If the recent shrinkage in American business should for any reason persist, then it seems likely that the slow but substantial growth of world trade, which had been gathering strength until the middle of last year, may be definitely arrested. With a decline in total trade it becomes all the more important that we should neglect no opportunity of expanding our exports, whatever other pressure may be put upon our productive capacity. The special rearmament demand is temporary; the maintenance of our export trade is a permanent necessity.

Against the ill-effects of a possible recession in international trade must be set the fact that we are favoured by far healthier basic conditions than existed prior to the last slump. Our industry is financially and technically stronger. In addition, world markets are not generally overburdened by vast stocks of materials, and producers are better organised to adjust their output to demand. While, therefore, I do not minimise the importance of American influence on us, I think it would be wrong to deduce from recent commodity and Stock Exchange movements that we are necessarily on a lasting downward curve. The clearing out of a speculative position, although accompanied by a severe fall in prices, is not in the long run bad for trade. Indeed, there are signs already that the depressing effect here of the American closing down of purchases of capital goods has spent its force, and that the underlying factors making for wider industrial activity are again coming into play. The great business of this country will still go on.

The report was adopted, other ordinary business was transacted, and the proceedings ended with a vote of thanks to the Chairman.

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Further particulars may be obtained from the *Secretary of the School, Houghton Street, Aldwych, London, W.C.2.*

THE INDIAN CIVIL SERVICE AND THE BURMA CIVIL SERVICE (CLASS I).
The entry for the I.C.S. and for the Burma Civil Service (Class I) closes this year on the 11th April. The recruitment of Europeans will be partly by selection and partly by written competitive examination. A candidate is at liberty to apply for appointment by both methods, but a separate form must be used for each. Forms may be obtained from the Services Department at the India Office or from the Appointments Boards of Universities in the British Isles. The age limits are 21 to 24 on the 1st August. Candidates for appointment by selection without written examination must have taken a good Honours Degree, but those who are sitting for their Final Honours Schools this year may be admitted provisionally. Full particulars can be had by applying to the Services Department at the India Office, Whitehall, London, S.W.1.
India Office.
January, 1938.

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON.—The Senate invite applications for the Rhodes Chair of Imperial History tenable at King's College. Salary £1,000 a year. Applications (12 copies) must be received not later than first post on February 21st, 1938, by the ACADEMIC REGISTRAR, University of London, W.C.1, from whom further particulars should be obtained.

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INDEX

An Index to Vol. XIV of the "New Statesman and Nation" is in the course of preparation and will be sent free, on application, to registered postal subscribers; to other readers, post free, one shilling.

NEW STATESMAN AND NATION
10 Gt. Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1

CHARGES FOR SMALL ADVERTISEMENTS

DETAILS of rates for single or a series of insertions will be found on page 179 of this issue.

LECTURES AND MEETINGS

CENTRAL LONDON LEFT BOOK CLUB GROUP. Professor Levy will speak on his book PHILOSOPHY FOR A MODERN MAN, January 29th, Kingsway Hall 8 p.m. Admission 6d.

FREE RELIGIOUS MOVEMENT towards world religion and world brotherhood. Meetings on Sundays at 11 a.m., at Lindsey Hall, The Mall, Notting Hill Gate, W.8. Leader: REV. WILL HAYES. Jan. 30th., "IN THE DESERT OF WAITING."

THE OVER THIRTY ASSOCIATION, 224a Shaftesbury Avenue, New Oxford Street, W.C.2. Wednesday, February 2nd, at 8.30 p.m. "Early Days of Woman's Suffrage—and Now." Speaker: MISS ISOBEL SAVAGOUR. Chair: Charles W. Barber, D.O.

THE ETHICAL CHURCH, Queen's Road, Bayswater, W.2. Sunday, January 30th, at 11, DR. COIT: "MY VENTURES IN SUPER-NORMAL INSIGHT." 6.30, No Service. Annual General Meeting of Members.

SOUTH PLACE ETHICAL SOCIETY, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn. Sunday, January 30th, at 11 a.m.: Miss ALISON NEILANS: "Changes in Sex Morality." 6.30 p.m., Concert Chamber Music. Admission free. Visitors welcome.

F.P.S.I. JOHN MACMURRAY on "The Cultural Basis of Unity." Wednesday, Feb. 2nd, at 8 p.m., at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square. Tickets: Members 6d., non-members 1s., from Secretary, F.P.S.I., 4 Fitzroy Street, W.1.

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A DEBATE arranged by The North Western Child Guidance Clinic. Motion: "That economic rather than psychological factors are responsible for the present world conflicts." Proposer: JOHN STRACHEY. Opposer: BARBARA LOW. Chairman: George Archibald, J.P. At the Caxton Hall, Westminster, S.W.1, on Thursday, February 3rd, 1938, at 8.15 p.m. Admission 2s. 6d. Questions invited.

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